Commentary

VOLUME NINETY-EIGHT • NUMBER THREE • SEPTEMBER 1994

A NEW SERIES ON THE MAJOR PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME. BEGINNING THIS MONTH...

WHAT TO DO ABOUT CRIME

James Q. Wilson

Next Year in (a Divided?) Jerusalem / David Bar-Illan

The Case for Global Activism / Robert Kagan

Lessons from the Soviet Collapse / Charles H. Fairbanks

The ADL vs. the "Religious Right" / Midge Decter

Clement Greenberg: An Appreciation / Roger Kimball

Flop at the OK Corral / Richard Grenier

Furtive Smokers: An Exchange / Peter L. Berger & Critics

Books in Review: Cathy Young / Jack Wertheimer / John Corry / Ben Wildavsky / Arch Puddington

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VOLUME 98 NUMBER THREE SEPTEMBER 1994

ARTICLES 25 **What To Do About Crime** *James Q. Wilson*
Much of what the experts tell us about crime in America is wrong, but there are certain things we now know that suggest new and better ways of deterring, policing, and punishing.

35 **Next Year in (a Divided?) Jerusalem** *David Bar-Illan*
Palestinian claims to the Holy City are spurious, and the Rabin government has declared the city indivisible; even so, the movement toward partition may prove irresistible.

40 **The Case for Global Activism** *Robert Kagan*
Instead of heeding calls to adjust to the new international realities, we would do better to take steps to shape them.

CONTENTIONS 45 **The ADL vs. the "Religious Right"** *Midge Decter*
In its recent "study" of Christian conservatives, a venerable Jewish defense organization anathematizes the beliefs and sensibilities of millions of Americans.

OBSERVATIONS 47 **Lessons from the Soviet Collapse** *Charles H. Fairbanks*
Two new histories of the Bolshevik period open a crucial debate over political arrangements in the modern world—including our own.

50 **Clement Greenberg: An Appreciation** *Roger Kimball*
Through his adamant defense of high culture, the late art critic attracted a formidable following, and provoked an equally formidable antagonism.

MOVIES 53 **Flop at the OK Corral** *Richard Grenier*
The legend of Wyatt Earp sinks under the weighty attentions of Kevin Costner, humanist.

LETTERS 2 Furtive Smokers; the Joint Staff; Israel; Saul Bellow; etc.

BOOKS 56 Who Stole Feminism? by Christina Hoff Sommers *Cathy Young*

58 Anti-Semitism in America, by Leonard Dinnerstein; A Scapegoat in the New Wilderness, by Frederic Cople Jaher *Jack Wertheimer*

60 News and the Culture of Lying, by Paul H. Weaver *John Corry*

62 The Homeless, by Christopher Jencks *Ben Wildavsky*

64 The Shadow of the Panther, by Hugh Pearson *Arch Puddington*

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Letters from Readers

Furtive Smokers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am forced to disagree with one of the finest thinkers in our modern world. In "Furtive Smokers—and What They Tell Us About America" [June], the brilliant Peter L. Berger is at least partially correct in warning us of the threats to our personal liberties by the politically-correct crowd. Unfortunately, in defending the alleged freedom to smoke, he has gone one step too far, slipping unwittingly into argument *ad hominem*. Mr. Berger overlooks the overwhelming evidence that smoking transcends mere individual preference and has adverse social consequences that simply cannot be ignored.

Smoking harms not only the health of those who indulge, but the nonsmoker is also subject to irritation, if not actual medical damage, from secondhand smoke. . . . The deteriorating physical condition of the smoker places enormous economic stress on our private-insurance programs and government-welfare system. There is no legitimacy to claims of an autonomous right of self-destruction if others are financially imposed upon. We no longer have an obligation to be tolerant.

DAVID THOMSON
Houston, Texas

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a practicing physician who has treated many individuals afflicted with tobacco addiction (TA), I believe Peter L. Berger's article tells us more about him than it does about the residual hard-core smokers in the U.S.

I have been treating patients with TA for over 30 years, publishing my first findings a quarter-century ago, when I was a naive young clinician (not statistician). I found patients who, indeed, ceased smoking. However, some of them became depressed, drank excessively, and beat their spouses. With experience, I learned to build in techniques that prevented the emergence of such untoward effects.

If the proverbial diabolical doctor of science fiction set out to create a substance that would cause disease, he could not have dreamed up a more malignant product than tobacco. Even H.G. Wells and George Orwell did not conceive of a product that could be massively produced worldwide, endowing those engaged in its production and manufacture with almost unbelievable political and economic power. Unlike the bad, illicit drugs, tobacco is legally sanctioned for use by hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

Let me give a few brief clinical sketches of the "nonstatistical" patients I have seen:

- An elderly woman with severe emphysema who walked into my office carrying an oxygen tank which she turned off only to smoke! . . .
- A young housewife with asthma who was asymptomatic until she was visited by houseguests who smoked.
- A middle-aged man with severe leg pain (intermittent claudication) when he walked who found that after he stopped smoking, he could walk for miles.

I could easily fill up this entire issue of COMMENTARY with similar case histories.

Mr. Berger whines that we have not categorically stated that cigars and pipes are less hazardous than cigarettes. A good clinical example of this misplaced denial was the unfortunate Sigmund Freud, who was addicted to cigars and underwent 31 operations for oro-pharyngeal carcinoma. Would Mr. Berger call this a nonhazard?

Mr. Berger states that studies "purport to show" that environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) is really not so bad. Ask the asthmatic I mentioned above and millions of other Americans who experience burning eyes, allergic symptoms, and other problems. Mr. Berger states that "by itself, the anti-smoking phenomenon will hardly be high on anyone's list of pressing concerns in America today." In terms of illness and death, there is no other single factor that comes near to producing the devastation caused by tobacco. . . .

Mr. Berger is right that those furtive smokers with whom we all sympathize do feel guilty, alone, and isolated. However, it is because of their inability to forgo the use of this, the most addictive substance in the world.

SHELDON B. COHEN, M.D.
Atlanta, Georgia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The publication and placement in COMMENTARY of Peter L. Ber-

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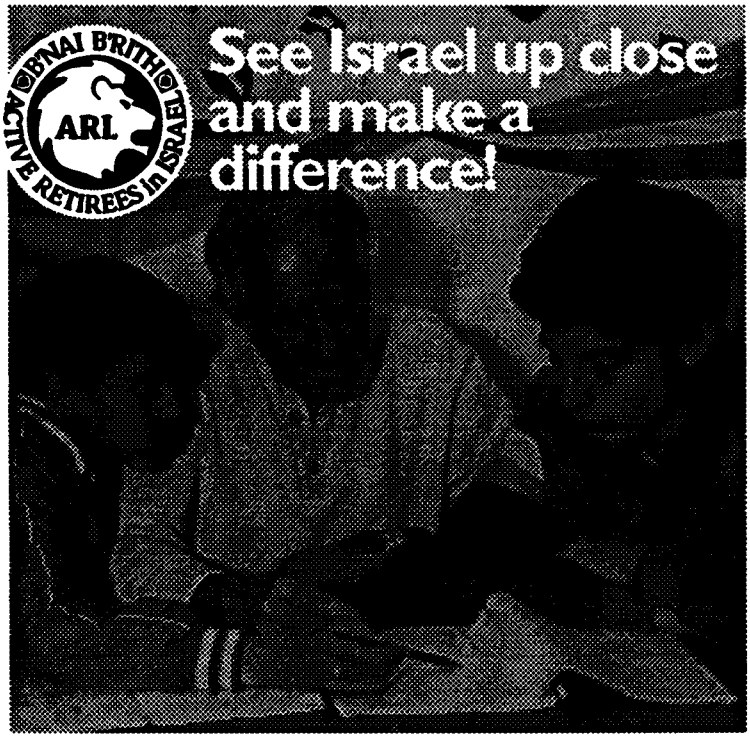

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ger's "Furtive Smokers—and What They Tell Us About America" are truly astonishing. Surely you do not subscribe to the bleating of smokers, tobacco growers, and tobacco companies that this is some sort of civil-rights issue and that curtailment of smoking in public spaces represents some sort of dictatorship?

The cost to the nation of harm to the smoker—in diseases and disabilities suffered that must be paid for—is bad enough, but there is ample evidence that smoking, at least of cigarettes, also harms others. The miasma of a smoke-filled room or vehicle; the stench of offices, homes, and clothes of those exposed to smoke; the distortion of the taste of foods in restaurants constitute reasons enough to have smoking labeled a public nuisance. We have laws about littering and polluting—smoking results in both. Its prohibition in public is amply justified, and any means that will counteract the seduction of the young into this addictive practice seem to me justified.

GEORGE E. EHRLICH, M.D.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"Furtive Smokers—and What They Tell Us About America" must be disputed on both practical and ideological grounds. It does not accurately depict why smoking is increasingly abhorred, nor does it identify why opponents of smoking feel they may be, finally, on the verge of "success." . . .

Central to the article's imagery is a shivering smoker, servicing addiction in foul weather, after having been expelled from his workplace. Central to its "science" is the assumption that the report of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the hazards of secondhand smoke merely represents a retrospectively-composed analysis, designed to fit preordained conclusions and premeditated governmental fiat. And central to its ideology is the concept that involvement in a "good cause" could become corrupting, that the commonweal is best left unsullied by searches for political correctness, that vigilance against overreaching laws must extend into every corner of society.

How accurate is the database upon which these views are built? And how true is the portrayal of the anti-tobacco movement's victory during recent years? . . .

The visceral flaw in the medical component of the argument is embodied in its erroneous rendition of the harmful consequences of smoking: "To be sure, the evidence is statistical rather than clinical, as the tobacco industry has protested all along." It is granted by Mr. Berger that smoking endangers health, particularly with reference to lung cancer. But how about lip, tongue, larynx, pharynx, esophagus, pancreas, kidney, bladder, and cervix? And how about legions of cardiac cripples and epidemics of wheezing emphysemics?

And regarding the EPA, what must be understood is that scientific studies are not always able to demonstrate a scientific fact; thus the need to define parameters for statistical significance. And behind the literature is the obvious infliction of the smoke-filled room upon the respiring inhabitant of public spaces. What is wrong with providing smoking restrictions to protect millions known to be sensitive (allergic or irritated) to the simple, known pollutant: tobacco exhaust fumes? If one cannot legally swing a fist beyond another's nose tip, then why should one's foul air be permitted to proceed beyond? Why should known carcinogens be inhaled and exhaled by all lungs, normal and impaired? The inability to take a deep breath is the worst pain one can experience. . . .

Ideology emerges when the drive for a smoke-free society is demeaned by its portrayal as arbitrary; and bias becomes palpable when sincere labor to achieve acknowledgment of the desirability of this goal is labeled discriminatory. To "single out" smoking represents little more than recognizing a diagnosis and formulating an effort to treat a pathogen. . . .

The anti-tobacco movement cannot be pigeonholed, nor are its participants neatly polarized. That is the origin of its strength, and the source of the fear it invokes in those who continue to peddle poison.

ROBERT B. SKLAROFF, M.D.
Rydal, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

According to a two-part series in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, smoking cigarettes is truly a life-and-death matter. Written by physicians at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, the series provides these disconcerting facts:

- In the United States in 1990, 418,690 deaths were attributed to the harmful effects of smoking; indeed, almost one in five deaths resulted from a smoking-related illness.
- Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in America today.
- In 1990, 179,820 deaths were attributable to a cardiovascular disease that resulted from smoking.
- Each year in the U.S. 53,000 die from environmental tobacco smoke; 151,322 people die from cancer caused by smoking. In 1990, 84,475 died from pulmonary diseases, such as pneumonia, influenza, bronchitis, emphysema, and chronic-airway obstruction, which resulted from smoking.
- Eighty-five percent of all lung cancer in the U.S. today is caused by smoking. Other cancers linked with tobacco use include cancers of the mouth, pharynx, larynx, esophagus, stomach, pancreas, uterine cervix, kidney, ureter, and bladder.
- There is a 33-percent increase in stillbirths and neonatal deaths among the babies of mothers who smoke. Each year there are 26,000 new cases of asthma among children caused by mothers who smoke ten or more cigarettes per day.

HAVEN BRADFORD GOW
Arlington Heights, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Peter L. Berger is no doubt correct to note that there is an unpleasant streak of Puritanical self-righteousness in the anti-smoking movement which can make smokers feel like pariahs. Frankly, though, I won't lose much sleep over this. Tobacco-chewing used to be somewhat more acceptable than it is today; if social conformism played a role in reducing the number of people who indulged this habit, then let us hear two cheers for social conformism and Puritanical self-righteousness. Now, if only the same pressures would work against people who carry boom-boxes or play their car radios at approximately 150 decibels.

That said, it seems predictably perverse that COMMENTARY would publish Mr. Berger's class-based analysis of the anti-smoking movement while ignoring the rather more interesting question of what drives thousands of well-educated people to work for an industry which causes the deaths of hun-

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dreds of thousands of Americans each year, along with perhaps two million people in other countries (though only some of these smoke American cigarettes). Not content with the present death rate, the industry also hopes to bring American cigarettes to untapped markets in Asia, which, according to the *New York Times,* might ultimately bring the annual death toll as high as ten million. If it has not already done so, the tobacco industry will kill more people in the next few decades than have died in all of the wars, concentration camps, and killing fields of the 20th century.

Mr. Berger and others might object to this comparison on the grounds that the smoker is exercising his free choice. But it is disingenuous to speak about adults exercising their right of free choice when in many cases smokers begin their habit in their teens when they are likely to see themselves as immortal; once addicted, it becomes very difficult for them to stop. Furthermore, I doubt the tobacco industry will go out of its way to warn foreign customers of the danger unless forced to by those New Class crusaders that Mr. Berger apparently holds in such contempt.

Finally, even if one restricts the discussion to those smokers who were old enough to make an adult decision to smoke and knew the risks, what motivates people to manufacture an addictive carcinogen and sell it? The answer, of course, is the desire for profit. How can they live with themselves? Rather easily, since we live in a country where both Left and Right confuse the legal right to do something with the moral right to do it, and where virtually any socially destructive activity is passionately defended and even justified by someone on the basis of individual freedom. The tobacco industry has been a great proponent of individual freedoms, but I do not think it is pumping huge amounts of money into public-relations campaigns because of an altruistic concern for the defense of individual life-style choices; the right it really cares about is the right to make a buck off other people's self-destructive choices. One might think this worthy of slightly more moral indignation than the Puritanical self-righteousness of the anti-smoking movement, but conservative ideologues rarely become too exercised by any sin which is rooted in the profit motive.

DONALD JOHNSON
Nyack, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

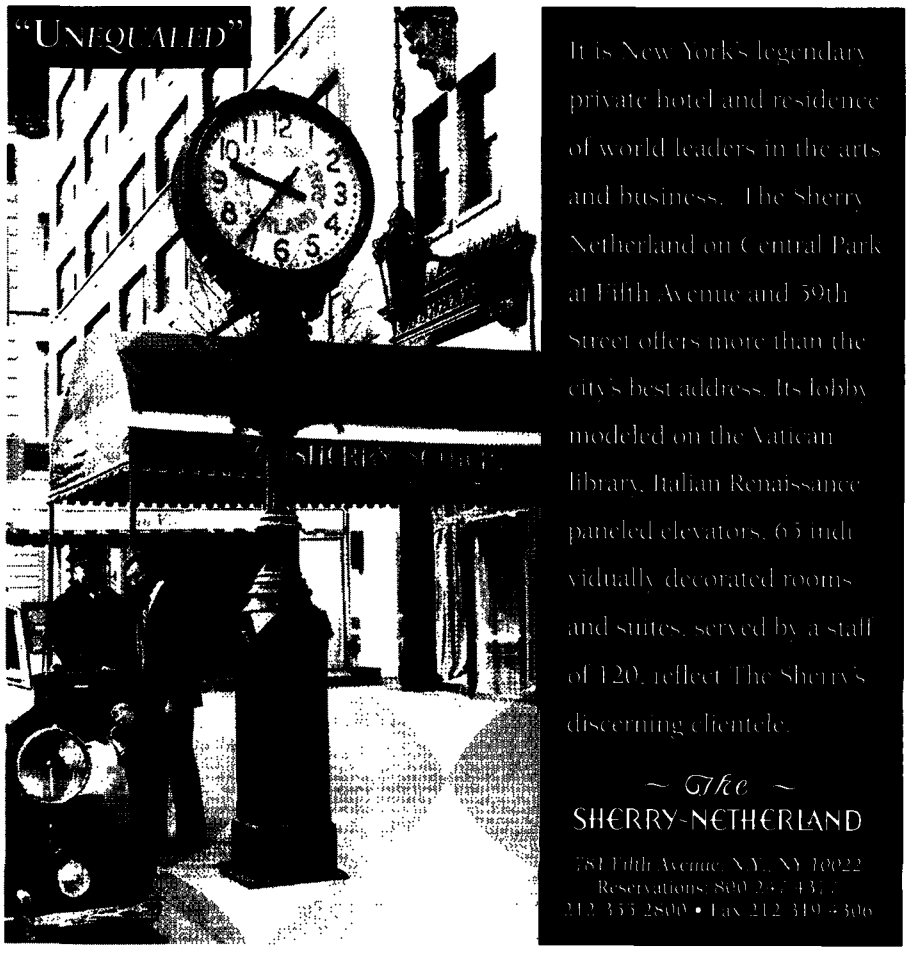
Peter L. Berger is to be commended for his penetrating analysis of tobacco smoking in America today. In the United States, as in Canada, the anti-smoking campaign has had a substantial impact. In both countries, the percentage of adult smokers in the population has declined dramatically. In Canada, this percentage has dropped from about 50 percent in 1961 to about 30 percent in 1991. Similarly, for the U.S., the figures were 40 percent in 1961 and 25 percent in 1991.

These declines in North America are undoubtedly the largest in the world; one need only compare the smoking experience in North America with Europe, Asia, and Africa. A visit I made to China in 1989, for example, revealed widespread smoking and a virtual absence of anti-smoking propaganda.

As a Canadian physician with specialist qualifications in both public health and clinical psychiatry, I have been involved with both preventive policy and the treatment of heavy smokers over the past 25 years. It is worth noting that the first major epidemiological study demonstrating the direct correlation between cigarette smoking and lung cancer was carried out by Dr. Richard Doll in England just after World War II. It took at least fifteen years before this finding had any significant influence over public policy or individual smokers' habits.

During the ensuing years, numerous studies in the U.S., Canada, and other countries have provided overwhelming confirmation of the linkage between tobacco smoking and serious pathology of the pulmonary, cardiovascular, and other organ systems. While epidemiological findings have been contested by spokesmen for the tobacco companies, they have been generally accepted as "hard" data which have been confirmed many times over by independent scientific studies.

On the other hand, Mr. Berger is accurate in pointing out the "softness" of the data concerning secondhand smoke.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Many factors have contributed to the decline in the incidence of cigarette smoking. The widespread educational campaigns over the years in schools, on billboards, on cigarette packages, on TV, and elsewhere have motivated literally millions of North Americans to abandon smoking completely and permanently. These ex-smokers have accepted the validity of the data and have quit, on their own, without any assistance.

Thus, during the past 30 years coronary-heart-disease mortality has declined by about 50 percent. The combined influence of reduced tobacco use, reduced intake of dietary cholesterol and fats, and more effective diagnosis and treatment of hypertension has paid off.

Notwithstanding these advances in prevention, the anti-smoking movement has grown and continues to target the remaining millions of smokers and their suppliers—the cigarette manufacturers. (Curiously, the farmers who grow the lucrative tobacco plant are somehow kept on the sidelines.)

A central factor driving the anti-smoking lobby has been the notion that tobacco smoking is an addictive phenomenon and, therefore, accounts for the great difficulty smokers face in quitting. Reports of Surgeons General of the U.S. have drawn this conclusion and have designated tobacco smoking as an addictive process equivalent to the use of heroin or crack cocaine. Having been involved with the treatment of moderate and heavy smokers from all walks of life, I have concluded that this notion violates common sense as well as extensive clinical observation.

I realize, of course, that I am expressing a minority view. However, for many years I have concluded that the fundamental obstacle many people face in seeking to abandon smoking is not *addiction* but *ambivalence.* When one questions any informed, articulate smoker about his desire to quit, he will respond that he wishes to stop but also to continue. Tobacco smoking is universally pleasurable and the smoker, while wishing on one level to stop and avoid the dire pathological consequences, is unwilling to pay the price and sacrifice the pleasure.

This concept is supported by the observation that persons with schizophrenic illness, especially in mental hospitals, find it virtually impossible to stop smoking because of their pathological ambivalence. Abstaining alcoholics also find it difficult; they have sacrificed alcohol and often refuse to submit to a further sacrifice.

I hold no brief for the cigarette manufacturer or for the tobacco farmer (let them grow soy). Nor need one feel sorry for the "furtive smoker." He need only take an essentially moral decision and not hide behind the flawed notion of addiction.

MURRAY S. ACKER, M.D.
North York, Ontario
Canada

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Peter L. Berger is right in his assumption that tobacco prohibition will be the next major extension of government power. But he misses the primary motivation of the anti-smoking campaign by blaming it on the leftist cultural elite. For the last several years, the United States has had a "war on drugs" and *tobacco is a drug.*

The "war on drugs" has been led by neoconservatives like William J. Bennett who believe that it is the government's duty to impart values to the people and punish citizens for moral transgressions. During the 1980's, the United States government launched a massive campaign against illegal drugs. It was only a matter of time before prohibition would be extended to legal drugs like tobacco.

After all, by what objective standard can you prohibit other drugs and then ignore tobacco?

• Addiction? Tobacco is, according to the U.S. Department of Health, one of the most addictive substances out there.

• Toxicity? Tobacco kills several hundred thousand people every year. Recent studies blame second-hand smoke for another 60,000 or so deaths a year. This is far greater than the number of people who are killed by illegal drugs. . . .

• Social pathologies? Rest assured that the moment tobacco is illegalized, your friends in law enforcement will start to tell you that because 90 percent (or some other percentage) of all criminals have smoked cigarettes at some time in their lives, tobacco causes crime. Ah, but you say, that is a correlation, not causation. True enough, but lapses in logic have never stopped the forces of prohibition. In reality, illegal drug use does not lead to a life of crime (other than selling/buying/possessing illegal substances). . . .

What can we expect from a campaign against tobacco? If the "war on drugs" is any guide, we will see police programs encouraging schoolchildren to turn in their parents who smoke; television public-service announcements stigmatizing tobacco smokers ("this is your lungs on tobacco. . . ."); screening tests in industry which will exclude smokers from employment; police use of infrared and molecular sensors to discover evidence of smoking; seizures of houses where tobacco is found growing. . . .

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms will be given extraordinary powers (as the Drug Enforcement Agency now has) to attack tobacco in this country. What happened at Waco, Texas, last year will be repeated as SWAT teams crash around the country looking for targets to attack. We might even see the armed forces get into the act. . . .

If tobacco smokers are not now willing to stand with other drug users in a single front for individual liberty, I guarantee that all will end up in the same federal-detention center. And if you are not willing to join the fight for liberty, do not start complaining when the tobacco Gestapo comes knocking on your door.

JOSEPH MIRANDA
Northridge, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Peter L. Berger assumes that Americans accept and tolerate the idea that "individual rights must be subordinated to the common good," but he overlooks the reality that individualism continues to exist in today's society. Though it does appear that the New Class is exerting its moralistic influence over America, turning us into "timid joiners" and "self-denigrating conformists," the truth may actually be that many Americans resent the revocation of their rights but are too indolent or unsure to verbalize their sentiments.

Americans should always be prepared to counteract the "slippery slope" of government control of their behavior. The proposed ban on smoking in all public places is one more example of this misguided regulation which pretends to advocate "protection" of the public. It may not seem as though Americans are fighting back, but if

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their rights to drink water from certain areas, to own diesel vehicles that use certain heating oils, or to live near electric-service lines which present the danger of electromagnetic fields were taken away, perhaps they would become more defiant. All of the above rights could be repealed if the standards involved in the case against secondhand smoke were followed.

Smokers may be harming or killing themselves, but even these actions should be respected as an expression of their individual rights. . . . Enough evidence of the true nature of our country lies in Benjamin Franklin's statement that "He who would exchange liberty for security deserves neither."

LAURA GASSLEIN
Lawrenceville, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

When I read Peter L. Berger's article on smoking, I felt like standing up and cheering. Mr. Berger hit a grand-slam with this one. I write only to put a slightly different spin on the problem in hopes of sharpening the debate just a little.

Mr. Berger concludes that the smoking debate is about the subordination of individual rights to the collective good. I agree, but I think it useful to point out that not all individual rights are at stake. For example, one rarely hears the New Class arguing that we should overturn the *Miranda* decision.

Mr. Berger comes closest to the central issue when he questions the role of the EPA in the anti-smoking campaign. Mr. Berger rightly observes that the EPA's "wetlands regulations add up to one of the most massive assaults on private property since the invention of zoning." He makes this point almost in passing, but here is where I think the whole ball game is to be found. One can make a plausible case that the individual right at stake in the smoking debate is not the right of smokers to smoke, if such a right exists in law, but that of private property—the right of owners of private property to use their property freely—which is codified in the takings and due-process clauses of the U.S. Constitution.

Notice that the principal regulatory and legislative efforts against tobacco take the form of bans on smoking in virtually all public places. According to those who favor the bans, public smoking is what economists would call an externality. Externalities sometimes justify government intervention. The mere existence of an externality, however, does not justify legislation. In a free society, which is supposed to be characterized by limited government and respect for private-property rights, at least two conditions must be satisfied before government intervention is warranted. First, the regulated action must in fact produce external costs. Second, there must be a market failure—a showing that people cannot solve the problem without government help.

No sensible observer can deny that smoking meets the first condition. When I smoke an after-dinner cigar, I impose a cost on those around me. The extent of this cost, however, is easily overstated. To be sure, many people find tobacco smoke annoying. But we are exposed to many annoyances in our daily lives. The real issue is whether secondhand smoke threatens the health of nonsmokers. Jacob Sullum, the Congressional Research Service, and others have demonstrated that the health effects of secondhand smoke are vastly overstated.

In the end, however, the question of whether public smoking should be the subject of federal legislation comes down to the issue of whether the problem can be solved by private ordering. Let us start with the most basic example: my backyard. Should I have the right to smoke a cigar on my back porch, where the only person who smells it is my dog? Presumably so, since I am not imposing on anyone (my dog seems to like the smell).

If you admit that a ban on smoking in my backyard is not appropriate, let us turn to restaurants. Restaurants are clearly a place in which private ordering can work and in which government intervention is unnecessary. Consider the following case: the 21 Club in New York City has a long history of being a cigar-friendly environment. Nonsmokers who eat there do so knowing that they may be exposed to cigar smoke. On what basis can such a person complain? Did he not assume the risk of being exposed to secondhand smoke by deciding to patronize an establishment that allows patrons to smoke cigars? Conversely, many restaurants already forbid smoking in whole or in part, especially restaurants that serve families. In these places, nonsmokers have a reasonable expectation of being safe from cigar smoke. . . .

This is what I mean by a system of private ordering: if the place is one that nonsmokers can readily choose to avoid, then they have no right to insist on imposing their preference for a smoke-free environment on me or (and this is the key point) the owner of the establishment. Absent a showing that private ordering cannot work, the owner of private property has a right to decide what conduct will take place on his property even if it is open to the public. So long as nonsmokers are free to decide not to enter an establishment in which smoking is allowed, the necessary prerequisite for regulating private property simply does not exist. What we have here, then, is exactly what we have in the spotted-owl and wetlands cases—one more unjustifiable limitation on private-property rights by a government that seems increasingly bent on destroying the minimal legal protections still afforded those rights.

STEPHEN M. BAINBRIDGE
College of Law
University of Illinois
Champaign, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Peter L. Berger offers a picture of American society "not as a nation of rugged individualists, but of timid joiners, petulant victims, and self-denigrating conformists." I assume he does not see that characterization as applying to the scattered remnants of smokers. I do not smoke, but my observation of smokers is that they see themselves not as timid but as brave souls, a put-upon minority, and even as a band of brothers in a sea of angry persecutors.

It apparently is the self-righteous persecutors who provide evidence of the pressure toward conformity that Mr. Berger laments. But apart from the pressure to conform, which, as he notes, has always been widespread in American society, what needs explanation is why the persecutors of smokers are so angry and self-righteous. . . .

One clue Mr. Berger mentions in passing: he notes, I think quite correctly, that the anti-smoking movement was hugely accelerated by the claim that environmental

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tobacco smoke was also deadly. In my mind, this link with environmentalism is no accident. As such, the search for a smoke-free world is related symbolically to the search for nonpolluted rivers, for national parks free of human beings, and for the endless Los Angeles freeway, which is, at last, completely smog-free—without, of course, restricting the rights of drivers in any way. . . .

But there is something else which helps account for the anger and self-righteousness of the anti-smokers. Its source is not any real danger of disease, which is slight. Rather, we must look to the analysis of pollution presented by the anthropologist Mary Douglas, who sees impurity as danger. We fear the smoke as polluting not simply our bodies (in much the same way as those who saw fluoridation as polluting) but, to paraphrase the words of the American general in *Dr. Strangelove*, as polluting our bodily essence. So the persecutors will be satisfied with nothing less than having smokers (if they will not stop altogether) carry the leper's bell, repeating "Unclean! Unclean!" as they huddle shamefully on the outskirts of the marketplace.

EDWARD GROSS
Professor Emeritus
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Among Peter L. Berger's penetrating observations on the pious crusade against smoking is that "American adolescence . . . has been a veritable pressure cooker of conformity."

Indeed, the elevation of . . . "youngness" and the corresponding discrediting of maturity . . . has become a hallmark of our Clintonian age. Look at youthful, blow-dried Bill jogging, and then look at old writers and editors at their typewriters—*smoking*! Look at advertising, TV, movies—everything. . . .

One longs for the robust spirit and tradition exemplified by an authentic, *mature* American like Mark Twain, whose only temperance rule was to smoke just one cigar at a time. He would hardly be welcomed in the White House today! Nor would Winston Churchill, who was also an incorrigible cigar smoker, or Franklin D. Roosevelt, a shameless smoker of cigarettes. . . .

Of course, when we think of Roosevelt or Churchill, we summon another age—a vanished era before TV, the jet plane, and the UN imposed their homogenizing heavy hands. Churchill, for instance, never stood in awe of Arabs or let them instruct him about *anything*—including smoking. After Churchill's last meeting with President Roosevelt, on board an American cruiser off Alexandria in February 1945, he gave a banquet for King Ibn Saud at the Fayyum Oasis—he had in mind a reshuffling of the Middle East, with Saud, as client of Britain, made suzerain over the entire region, including a Jewish Palestine. . . . Protocol people told him the king forbade drinking or smoking in his presence. Churchill's full reaction is not recorded—perhaps it was unprintable—but this much is preserved: he was the host, and made it clear to his guest that

> if it was his religion that made him say such things, my religion prescribe[s] as an absolute sacred ritual smoking cigars and drinking alcohol before, after, and, if need be, during all meals and the intervals between them.

The feast went off without a hitch. Churchill was a *mensch*. And he lived to be ninety.

DAVID LYON HURWITZ
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Congratulations to Peter L. Berger. He has skewered the political philosophy of the 1960's, whose adherents are now ensconced in parts of the media, colleges and universities, think tanks, public-interest law firms, and the White House. Their politics is utopian, parallel to Marxism-Leninism, and instinctively hostile to Western (particularly American) concepts of individual liberty. The guiding principle of utopian philosophy is that human nature is perfectible. Utopians seek to reconfigure and perfect society by using the coercive power of the state. . . .

Mr. Berger has pointed out the tenuous nature of the claims that smoking hurts others. In the march toward utopia, truth is any claim that advances the cause. In order to persuade the American people, or at least render them uninterested in opposition, the New Class . . . in its anti-smoking campaign had to emphasize harm to innocent bystanders. How else to render statutory what was hitherto private behavior?

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The choreographed speech control which passes for political correctness on campuses is the product of the same people who preached an absolutist interpretation of the First Amendment when they were out of power. Political correctness is another example of attempted state control of perceived bad attitudes and behavior. But this at least has generated a backlash. . . .

Mr. Berger is concerned that the anti-smoking crusade is a harbinger of the future. I hope that he will write as concisely about the next event. I suspect he will not have long to wait.

GLORIA M. STEWART
Thousand Oaks, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Peter L. Berger's article was refreshing and long overdue.

Just who do these neo-Prohibitionists and "health" promoters think they are, increasingly dictating how we should live our private lives? Although the health-promotion movement had noble beginnings, it seems to be degenerating into a vindictive crusade with myriad trappings of a witch hunt. In addition, it has become one of a number of current causes whose tactics and ends in no small way desecrate the Bill of Rights.

The great irony here is that Americans have been asked in numerous wars to sacrifice their health—even their lives—for freedom. Now, however, they are being told to surrender that very freedom in the name of health! Whatever happened to "give me liberty or give me death"?

As a life-long smoker, I believe health-promotion zealotry presents a far greater threat to my well-being than does environmental tobacco smoke. Let there be no doubt about it: those who dictate our life-styles dictate our lives.

JOHN H. KILWEIN
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Applause to Peter L. Berger for sounding the alarm on the "furtive-smoker" complex, his metaphor for the increasing tension between individualism and conformity in this country. It is, arguably, the leading dilemma of our times.

The insidious collectivism Mr. Berger speaks of is mushrooming slowly and steadily . . . in response to the machinations of the New Class. The result is a situation now involving something more serious than strain on a governing philosophy and system of American values balanced between two opposing concepts. These concepts have been more or less with us for a very long time now, but have been moderate in their composition. . . .

That composition is ominously changing. The extreme elements are aiming at domination of both parties, and woe to the nation that disregards this change. . . .

And meanwhile, the Left, with its unrestrained do-goodism, beckons us with the siren song of increased governmental interference and control, leading also to eventual authoritarian socialism. With such polarization taking place in America today, we seem poised for an eventual showdown—and all in the name of improvement in the quality of life. It is the very pinnacle of irony that the warring factions will each have been a little right and a little wrong. At age seventy, I doubt I shall witness any resolution of this conflict, but I fear for my grandchildren and for my country.

STANLEY P. KESSEL
Hollywood, Florida

PETER L. BERGER writes:

I will reply to David Thomson's letter more extensively than to the other letters commenting on my article, not because he generously refers to me as "one of the finest thinkers in our modern world" (though, come to think of it, *that* deserves some special treatment), but because his comments touch succinctly on the two major points at issue in the current campaign against environmental tobacco smoke (ETS).

Mr. Thomson proposes that "smoking transcends mere individual preference and has adverse social consequences," and this proposition is supposed to be supported by "overwhelming evidence." It is, first of all, unclear what evidence he has in mind. The evidence that smoking harms smokers is, if not overwhelming, certainly robust; the evidence that smoking harms nonsmokers is *under*whelming with a vengeance. But leave aside the matter of evidence, important though it is. I would ask Mr. Thomson: what do we do that does *not* transcend our individual preferences and that does *not* have social consequences, some of them adverse? Masturbation comes to mind. Not much else. My diet and my exercise (or lack thereof) minimally affect those who live with me; the way I raise my children will affect everyone who has to deal with them throughout their lifetimes; my notorious ignorance of geography affects my voting on matters of foreign policy and may implicate me in terrible events on the other side of the globe; and so on.

Mr. Thomson hedges on the "overwhelming evidence" by saying that secondhand smoke, even if it does not cause actual medical damage, is an "irritation," thus (he implies) justifying proscriptive intervention. I would not want to diminish Mr. Thomson's generally high opinion of me by listing here all the behaviors that irritate me in public life and which, if government came to my assistance, would inaugurate a veritable regime of terror; but I invite him to make a mental list of *his* irritations. And then Mr. Thomson tells us that we have no right to self-destructive behavior "if others are financially imposed upon." This, of course, is the argument from "social costs." If pursued to its logical conclusion, it is a blueprint for a therapeutic totalitarianism, because virtually all our actions have social consequences which in turn impose costs on others. It is precisely because the slippery-slope character of the social-costs argument becomes obvious upon even cursory reflection that the anti-smoking movement has not pushed it very hard and has instead concentrated on the "innocent-bystander" argument—the nonsmokers allegedly harmed by ETS.

I am glad that Murray S. Acker agrees that the data on ETS are "soft" and that the application of the term "addiction" to tobacco smoking is inappropriate. I am sure that he is right when he says that many smokers are ambivalent about their habit, at least when they are "informed." He should add, I think, that "information" makes for ambivalence all over the place, because the more we are "informed," the more we realize the risks we take every day. I am also sure that Stephen M. Bainbridge is right when he points out that private-property rights are very much involved in this issue. I too would wish that more room were allowed in our society for what he calls "private ordering."

No sensible person would quar-

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rel with Sheldon B. Cohen's point that smoking is bad for people with the conditions of the patients he mentions. I gather from his letter that treating patients with these conditions is a specialty of his, and this makes understandable his strong feelings in the matter. After I read his letter, I found myself imagining the feelings of a trauma surgeon about automobiles, as day-in, day-out he sees the victims of automobile accidents in the emergency room. One would understand if this individual would want the government to ban or at least greatly reduce the number of automobiles, to prohibit automobile advertising (especially targeted to young people, who cause most accidents), and to pillory the CEO's of the major automobile-manufacturing companies. After all, there are about 50,000 deaths resulting annually from automobile accidents in the United States (and this figure derives from an actual count, not from the fanciful statistical projections that generate the numbers thrown about by the anti-smoking movement).

The editors of this publication must decide whether George E. Ehrlich is right in finding it "truly astonishing" that my article appeared in their pages. I will only note, once more, that there is an odd ambiguity here as to whether the alleged "ample evidence" about ETS concerns actual medical harm or only what Dr. Ehrlich calls a "public nuisance."

My advice to Haven Bradford Gow: do not believe everything you read in the papers! Not even in the *New England Journal of Medicine*! I must confess that I do not subscribe to that publication, so I cannot tell whether Mr. Gow's figure of 53,000 deaths annually from ETS comes from that source. Wherever Mr. Gow took this (indeed "truly astonishing") figure from, it affords wonderful support for my prediction that the estimated number of ETS-caused fatalities will rise as the current campaign escalates. Thus far, we have been told over and over again that about 3,000 Americans die from ETS every year. If this figure has now gone up to the one cited by Mr. Gow, I would take it as moderately good news: the anti-smoking crusaders must feel that they are running into opposition!

I agree with Edward Gross that the link with environmentalism is important. I also agree that one reason for the link is the fear of impurity that was studied by Mary Douglas. One may also refer here to the work that Douglas did in collaboration with the late Aaron Wildavsky, *Risk and Safety* (1982); Wildavsky continued this inquiry in his *Searching for Safety* (1988). The lessons from these studies are essentially simple: the notion of a risk-free life is utopian, and to try to take no risks at all is perhaps the greatest risk of all. The environmentalist movement and the anti-smoking campaign, along with several other contemporary cultural trends, share the utopian fantasy and create their own risks, not least the risk of tyrannically intrusive government. The "robust spirit" which David Lyon Hurwitz longs for in looking back to an earlier period of Western history was probably in large measure based on the acceptance of the dangers of life.

Donald Johnson wants more, not less, social pressure against putatively obnoxious behavior, such as that of people marching around with "boom-boxes." Maybe. But would he want federally prescribed decibel levels? Mostly, he denounces the tobacco industry. It seems that the industry is motivated by profit and is disingenuous in some of its arguments. I do not doubt it. The same motivation and the same disingenuousness characterize the industry's foes. Most disingenuous is the notion that here is a battle between the vested interests of the tobacco industry and those who are motivated only by disinterested concern for the public welfare. It is important to understand that there are anti-tobacco interests as there are tobacco interests.

Joseph Miranda gives it to conservatives for being upset about the anti-smoking movement while having been enthusiastic about the "war on drugs." He has a point, though only the most committed anti-smoking activist would equate the lethal effects of cigarettes and, say, heroin. In any case, I happen to be one conservative who believes that the "war on drugs" has been an exercise in monumental folly. But that is another story. Laura Gasslein is optimistic about American individualism reasserting itself. May she be right! I could not agree more with Gloria M. Stewart as to the hostility to freedom of all brands of utopianism,

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as I also agree with John Kilwein that health-promoting zealotry is more dangerous than ETS.

The Joint Staff

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Edward N. Luttwak's article, "Washington's Biggest Scandal" [May], is confusing. He sets up his thesis by claiming that the biggest scandal in town is "nothing less than the collapse of civilian control over the military policies and military strategies of the United States." The culprit in his piece is the multiservice Joint Staff, accountable to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) for developing policy positions on military matters. Throughout his article, Mr. Luttwak blames the Joint Staff for everything from the Clinton administration's confused Balkan policy to its flawed and increasingly irrelevant "Bottom-Up Review" of America's defense needs. After thus laying the blame for America's post-cold-war strategic drift at the doorstep of the Joint Staff, he rather surprisingly concludes that "the only true remedy" to the problem is "to keep a very strong Joint Staff" balanced with competent civilian leadership.

As I have been able to piece it together, then, the logic of Mr. Luttwak's argument is: we need a strong Joint Staff. We have a strong Joint Staff. That strong Joint Staff cannot come up with satisfactory answers to America's strategic imperatives without equally strong civilian leadership. We do not have strong civilian leadership. Therefore, the Joint Staff is responsible for the collapse of civilian leadership over the military. And it is a scandal, to boot.

Mr. Luttwak's confusion seems to spring from his frustration with the man whom he terms "that most manipulative of generals," former JCS chairman, General Colin Powell. To Mr. Luttwak, General Powell personified the strength that the Joint Staff obtained in the wake of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act which, *inter alia*, made the chairman of the JCS the principal military adviser to the President and made the Joint Staff accountable to the chairman, rather than to the corporate body of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mr. Luttwak raises General Powell's objections to lifting the ban on homosexuals in the military and to deeper involvement in Bosnia as proof of the general's "contemptuous" manipulation.

But what appears to Mr. Luttwak as manipulation was strangely unobservable when there was competent civilian leadership in the Pentagon and, indeed, the White House. I served on the Joint Staff (Strategy and Policy Directorate) for two years during General Powell's tenure, from 1991 to 1993. I can say without qualification that there was no doubt on the Joint Staff to whom we were (collectively) subordinate. Our clear guidance was to find consensus with the civilian staff of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) on policy issues. That sometimes meant overruling parochial concerns of the individual armed-service staffs in order to find a position that would be compatible with OSD objectives. And there was never any doubt whence our guidance came: from the chairman via the three-star director of the Joint Staff. Moreover, it seemed obvious that the OSD staff had similar guidance from then-Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney. Thus, in the interagency process by which national-security policy is made in Washington, we simply never entered a meeting with our State Department and National Security Council staff counterparts without a consolidated (and thereby stronger) OSD/Joint Staff position. This mutually reinforcing attitude permeated every level of the Pentagon and was reflected in the close and respectful relationship between Secretary Cheney and General Powell.

Washington's real scandal, which Mr. Luttwak seems unwilling to confront, is that this close cooperation was dashed when it became clear that the new civilian leadership ushered in with the Clinton administration was as often as not uninterested in the Joint Staff position on important policies. Consider the military "gay ban," which was symbolic of the new "spirit" of civil-military relations after January 1993. If President Clinton could announce such a bold policy change without having asked for or received military advice from his principal military adviser, what could be expected from President Clinton's civilian subordinates in the Pentagon on issues that were not nearly as visible or sensitive? The situation has devolved to the point that now Joint Staff officers are often not informed of or invited to interagency meetings by their OSD counterparts. At other times, OSD staffers will issue positions on a given issue to their opposite numbers in uniform on a "take-it-or-leave-it" basis. To some extent, of course, this new approach does reflect a certain civilian control over the military, but not in any healthy or productive sense.

Mr. Luttwak is at least intellectually honest enough to acknowledge the leading role he played in the defense-reform debate that led to the Goldwater-Nichols legislation. The upshot of that debate was that a collection of armchair strategists and retired officers foisted upon a very reluctant military a reorganization designed to do the very thing that Mr. Luttwak and others now decry; to wit: dampen interservice parochialism by creating a powerful chairman and Joint Staff. In his own book on the subject, Mr. Luttwak went so far as to suggest that the nation's chief military officer—the director of the National Defense Staff, in his formula—be of five-star rank; he felt at the time that even the term "'chairman' has weak, commercial connotations."

Thank you, Mr. Luttwak, for your memorable contributions to defense reorganization. At least have the modesty to back out of the problem now and let the nation figure out how to deal with the very real, if unintended, consequences of a streamlined and exceptionally professional military staff under incompetent civilian leadership.

LARRY DI RITA
The Heritage Foundation
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Edward N. Luttwak simply will not let up on involving American armed forces, or more specifically, the U.S. Air Force (USAF), in other people's business. It is not at all clear just how that force would solve the "ethnic-cleansing" problem in Bosnia, and Mr. Luttwak sheds little light on the problem except to assert that the Air Force can do the job. Presumably his assertion is based on the stellar performance of the USAF in the air war over Iraq in the winter of 1991. However, if the air war was so effective, why is Saddam Hussein still in power? The truth

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is, and this is a lesson that many refuse to learn, that the ground forces were essential to the grinding up of the Iraqi Republican Guard. When General Schwarzkopf ceased the attack, the remainder of the Guard escaped. In short, air power is necessary but not sufficient (unless, of course, we are prepared to bomb our adversaries "back to the Stone Age" with *nuclear weapons*).

As for the Army's relatively recent decision to make its forces dependent on reserves, that also is not true. That decision goes back to General Creighton Abrams immediately after Vietnam. Abrams wanted to structure the Army so that it could not go into combat without the wholehearted support of the American people, in order to avoid another Vietnam. How to do that? Require the call-up of reserves. In truth, the Army did not make very effective use of reserves in the Gulf war because, counter to Mr. Luttwak's thesis about the Joint Staff, the Army's heart was not in the reserve and National Guard. The use of reserves by the Navy was even poorer. The USAF was easily the outstanding service in making use of the "total-force" concept, with the Marines falling somewhat behind.

Yes, there is a danger of the loss of civilian control of the armed forces, and Mr. Luttwak acknowledges the problem at the very end of his article. The danger stems, of course, from the flower child who is now the nation's commander-in-chief. The services are operating in a near-vacuum and they are only *trying to protect themselves as best* they can from an array of harebrained schemes. The only reason we do not have a complete vacuum is the presence of William Perry as Secretary of Defense. But one man cannot mind the store alone.

ROBERT C. WHITTEN
Navy League of the United States
Cupertino, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Edward N. Luttwak's attack on the Joint Staff reflects either woeful ignorance about the workings of the U.S. defense establishment or intellectual dishonesty. Since, presumably, Mr. Luttwak learned something about the American military during his years of writing about it, I must conclude that it is the latter. Although such touching solicitude about civilian control of the military from an avowed admirer of the Prussian General Staff system is welcome, alas, it is merely a smoke screen designed to conceal his real complaint: the military advice emanating from the Pentagon does not match the advice he is giving to whoever is paying his way these days, apparently the U.S. Air Force. . . .

Mr. Luttwak makes a number of outrageous claims. I can address only the most egregious of them: (1) that the former chairman of the JCS, General Colin Powell, . . . "overruled the newly inaugurated Clinton with contemptuous ease" on a number of issues; (2) that "the power of the Joint Staff persists undiminished, at the expense of the civilians of the OSD"; (3) indeed, that "presidential appointees . . . are not even allowed to examine . . . contingency war plans . . ."; and (4) that "charged to define an all-new military structure for the post-cold-war era, the Joint Staff . . . [came] up in the end with much the same old mix of ground, air, and naval forces as before."

1. General Powell does not need me to defend him against Mr. Luttwak's gratuitous, mean-spirited personal attack. But beyond what most readers will recognize to be preposterous claims, the attack misses the point: President Clinton's principal military adviser gave his advice, and the President took it. That does not constitute overruling the President. If we are to believe Bob Woodward's book, *The Commanders*, General Powell favored economic sanctions against Iraq over the early use of military force to dislodge Saddam *Hussein from Kuwait. His* commander-in-chief at the time chose not to accept his advice.

2. The only "power" the Joint Staff has vis-à-vis the civilians of the OSD is the power of the JCS chairman's advice. If the advice is sound, it will prevail. But this is only to say that good ideas have more "power" than bad ones.

3. Access to war plans *is* restricted. But this is true within the Joint Staff as well as OSD. Not every member of the Joint Staff has routine access to war plans. "Need to know" is a sound principle for keeping secrets. That said, civilian access to the plans is greater now than before Goldwater-Nichols. . . . Mr. Luttwak apparently has been listening to the whining of some presidential appointee, a "defense intellectual" no doubt, whose lack of military experience matches his own.

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4. Mr. Luttwak's critique of the Bottom-Up Review force structure is wrong because it fails to account for the role of other Department of Defense players (not to mention Congress) in force-planning. But to understand what he is up to in criticizing a balanced force structure, one must realize that Mr. Luttwak is a recent convert to the idea that "air power . . . is the most usable military instrument we have." . . .

It is clear that Mr. Luttwak thinks the U.S. should intervene in Bosnia and that air power could effect a decision there. He seems to believe that the only reason we have not done so is that backward-looking, ground-oriented JCS chairmen, such as General Powell and his successor, General John Shalikashvili, abetted by an all-powerful Joint Staff still dominated by service parochialism, continue to "overrule their commander-in-chief."

But if air power by itself could not force Saddam Hussein to quit Kuwait—if, in other words, it was not independently decisive, either militarily or politically, even in a theater tailor-made for its application—how would Mr. Luttwak realistically apply air power in Bosnia to achieve military, much less political, goals? In the Balkans, the only real center of gravity vulnerable to air power, as Mr. Luttwak envisions it, is Belgrade.

The Joint Staff, unlike Mr. Luttwak, understands that balanced forces are a strategic necessity for a country like the United States. Overreliance on one military instrument is a recipe for disaster. But the Joint Staff is not alone. The OSD recognizes this point as well.

The best response to Mr. Luttwak's diatribe comes from a colleague of mine on the Joint Staff: "After a year of battling over arms-control issues, first within the Department of Defense and then within the interagency arena, I came away convinced that the good the Joint Staff does the nation is not so much the good policies it invents as the bad policies it prevents."

MACKUBIN THOMAS OWENS
Naval War College
Editor-in-Chief, *Strategic Review*
Newport, Rhode Island

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Edward N. Luttwak again brilliantly and self-critically writes about how the Joint Chiefs of Staff sandbagged Presidents Bush and Clinton, Congressmen, and Senators, as well as our countrymen.

In 1993, John Kenneth Galbraith noted that the military had become a sacred cow whose judgment could not be questioned. Thanks to Mr. Luttwak, we now know how this was achieved. He concludes, correctly, that the loss of civilian control over the military is both a threat to constitutional government and prevents the development of clear policies for the post-cold-war world.

SHELDON C. SELLER
Riverton, Connecticut

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK writes:

I am grateful for Larry Di Rita's highly informative letter: there is not a word he wrote that I can disagree with, except for his charge that my argument was ultimately self-contradictory. I see no contradiction. Do we want to ensure civilian control by contriving to weaken the Joint Staff? Thoroughly demoralized military leaders, who no longer even try seriously to prepare their forces for combat, are almost a norm among our NATO allies. That is not a model that we should emulate. Do we therefore want to surrender civilian control? Surely not. The only answer therefore *is* to keep a very strong military leadership, but to balance it with effective civilian control. Out of that creative tension, new military policies could emerge to confront today's challenges, instead of merely preserving the structure of forces brought into existence to cope with yesterday's requirements.

Had I been writing a treatise on the current state of our defense establishment as a whole, and not an article devoted to one aspect of it, I would have examined the civilian side of the issue, too. Mr. Di Rita has now done so, and I cannot disagree with what he wrote. As a matter of fact, before an abbreviation for brevity's sake, the conclusion of my article read as follows:

> The only true remedy is to keep a very strong Joint Staff, but to balance it with the counterweight of equally assertive civilian leadership. And that of course is now the problem, because of all his different roles, Clinton is least persuasive as our commander-in-chief. Elected in spite of having artfully evaded military service in a time of war, after a campaign in which he said as little as possible about national defense other than that he was for it, Clinton scarcely has a mandate to reform the Pentagon. That he cannot help. Less forgivable was Clinton's failure to support his first and perfectly competent Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, whom the usual White House policy persons of no known expertise felt free to deride as "weak" and "indecisive" in talking with the press. In the circumstances, all we can hope for is that Clinton has learned his lesson, and that he will now loyally back Aspin's successor, William Perry. Even so, Perry will have a mighty struggle to cope with the consequences of two decades of drift in asserting civilian control.

Robert C. Whitten detects error in my timing of the transfer of support forces to the reserves (to prevent any large war deployment without their mobilization, and the consequent moral and political engagement of the nation in the enterprise). Yet I made it clear that this was a response to the abandonment of our forces sent to fight in Indochina, not a Gulf-war contrivance. As Mr. Whitten writes, it was General Creighton Abrams, an outstanding and hugely underestimated military leader, who made the decision upon becoming the first post-Vietnam Army Chief of Staff, a decision largely implemented a full decade before Desert Shield.

I will not reply to Mackubin Thomas Owens, given the tone of his letter; having once had the good fortune of a close association with the Naval War College, at the very time when it underwent its own brilliantly successful and enduring reform, I trust that he is an exception among its faculty. The letter does, however, illustrate the ill-tempered response of some less thoughtful Navy people to the always paradoxical and habitually cruel logic of strategy: victory undoes the victors by rendering them superfluous. The build-up of the (almost) 600-ship Navy played its own significant role in precipitating the Soviet Union's debacle, by thwarting its striving for supremacy (had this goal been achieved, the eventual ruination of the Soviet economy would have been irrelevant to our plight). Precisely because the U.S. Navy was so successful (to win without battle is the highest achievement), the need for its surface warships and submarines has now abruptly and drastically diminished. The Army and Marines still have potential en-

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emies to fight; U.S. air-offensive power—including that of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps based on carriers—still has an abundance of potential targets. But both the attack submarines and surface warships that account for a very large part of the U.S. Navy now coexist with a Russian navy that is virtually immobilized and literally rusting away, a still minuscule Chinese blue-water navy, a modest Indian navy, as well as the navies of Britain, France, Japan, Italy, and other allies against which any combat is utterly implausible. The panoply of surface escorts that was once indispensable to shield aircraft carriers, the defensive aircraft that we once needed to protect them, and most of the attack submarines have lost much of their *raison d'être.* That is cruel for the human beings who dedicated themselves to tasks once essential as well as exceedingly arduous. However, it is not anti-Navy analysts who have arranged matters so, but rather our conjoint success in forcing history to take its present turn.

I wish to thank Sheldon C. Seller for his kind letter.

Israel

To the Editor of Commentary:

In "Israel: Guilt & Politics" [May], David Bar-Illan characterizes the irrational, anti-Jewish, anti-Israel sentiments of those who call themselves the Left in Israel as those of self-hatred. He may well be right about this; there are Jews who accept the truth of anti-Semitic accusations and try to prove themselves innocent of them.

But the attitudes he describes are very similar to those of the Left in free countries everywhere: how dreadful, how oppressive their countries or the "system" or the "power structure" are. This is the same as the old Soviet line on the United States, but directed at Israel. It is the line of such stalwarts of the Left as I.F. Stone and Noam Chomsky against both the United States and Israel. It is the line used by the Left—the proponents of diversity, feminism (Marxist-Leninist variety), anti-Eurocentrism, political correctness, etc. . . .

Judy Wubnig
Waterloo, Ontario
Canada

To the Editor of Commentary:

I would like to comment on David Bar-Illan's excellent if sad-

You deserve a factual look at...

Jerusalem

Whose city—whose "holy city" is it?

It's twenty-seven years, since Israel's victory in the Six-Day War, that the city of Jerusalem has been reunited under Israeli rule. It was understood that Jerusalem was Israel's undivided capital. But now, in the context of the peace negotiations with the Palestinians—unwittingly buoyed by the accomodating attitude of the current Israeli government—the status of Jerusalem has once more become the object of discussion.

What are the facts?

A city of many nationalities. Before the end of the 1967 Six-Day War, during which the Israeli Defense Forces reconquered Jerusalem from the Jordanians, claims to Jerusalem being a Moslem holy city were rarely, if ever asserted. Jerusalem had always been a city in which many religions and nationalities lived side by side. It was only after the old city was back in Jewish hands that the Moslem Arabs declared their willingness to wage "jihad" (holy war) to bring the city back into Arab possession.

The notion to call Jerusalem an Islamic holy city has only come about in modern times, especially after the Arabs lost the city in the Six-Day War. It now has gained currency by dint of constant repetition. The basis for the claim is that Jerusalem does indeed contain an Islamic holy site, namely the Temple Mount (sacred to both Jews and Moslems) with its two mosques. It is the place from which Mohammed is believed to have ascended to heaven. Mohammed never set foot in Jerusalem. But aware that it was the holy city of Jews and Christians, and wishing to convert them to his new religion, he commanded his followers to build a mosque in Jerusalem. But never in Moslem history did this mosque compare in significance to those in the Moslem holy cities of Mecca and Medina—cities that no "infidel" may visit.

"Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning, and of Jewish thinking for over 3000 years."

A tenuous Moslem claim. It's on the basis of this religious tradition that the Moslems designated the entire Jewish Temple Mount to be their holy site. All Israeli governments, in their constant spirit of accommodation to Moslem sensibilities, have largely acceded to this tradition and have put the area in and around the two mosques entirely under Moslem control. But how would Christians feel if, instead of from the Temple Mount, Moslem tradition had Mohammed ascend from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and if the Moslem Arabs were to claim that site as their property? The Christian world, often ready to consent to Moslem claims against Jews and Israelis, would be greatly astonished and would certainly resist such claim. But Moslem Arab assertiveness doesn't end there. They have construed a claim to the entire city of Jerusalem (or at least to its eastern part), which they have declared to be their "third holiest city" and the capital of their proposed state. And it would be an insult to all Moslems to leave the city in the hands of the "infidel Jews".

Jerusalem: never an Arab capital. But the city of Jerusalem—in contrast to Baghdad, Cairo, and Damascus—has never played any major role in the political and religious lives of the Moslem Arabs. It was never a political center, never a national or even a provincial or sub-provincial capital of any country since biblical times. It was the site of one Moslem holy place, but otherwise a backwater to the Arabs. The passion for Jerusalem was not discovered by the Moslem Arabs until most recent history.

Jews are not the usurpers in Jerusalem. They have been living there since the Biblical era and have been the majority population since the 19th century. Jews have holy sites in most cities of the world. But do they claim sovereignty over those cities because of it? Of course not! It would be preposterous. And the Moslem Arab claim to Jerusalem, based on the mosques on the Temple Mount, is just as untenable. Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning, and of Jewish thinking for over 3000 years. That is the reason that the State of Israel has rededicated the Jewish holy city to be its indivisible capital.

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dening article. . . . It can only be hoped that the shocking revelations of Yasir Arafat's bellicose intentions in his secret *jihad* speech in Johannesburg have sobered up even the hardened defeatists in Israel who trusted Arafat but who now must know . . . that the PLO has no intention whatsoever of pursuing peace, but will continue its campaign to dismantle Israel. . . .

Thank God, we American Jews can turn to Congress for protection against the PLO. . . . The recently established Peace Accord Monitoring Group of 44 Senators and Congressmen from both parties will make sure that not one cent of U.S. taxpayers' money goes to the PLO until it convincingly proves that it has complied with its September 13 commitments to abrogate the provisions of its Covenant calling for the destruction of Israel; stop terrorism; punish terrorists; lift the Arab boycott; etc. Incidentally, this historic achievement was accomplished by the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) and CIPAC (the Christian Israel PAC), without any help whatsoever from . . . "establishment leaders."

These results show that we can do more than just lament the disaster of the so-called "peace" process. We can support those organizations and representatives who defend a strong, not a truncated, Israel.

MANFRED R. LEHMANN
Miami Beach, Florida

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

David Bar-Illan quotes an Israeli journalist who claims that Strobe Talbott, the new Deputy Secretary of State, holds views that are "perfectly in tune" with the views of Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. Mr. Bar-Illan then notes that Talbott, unlike Peres, compared Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait to the Israeli administration of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza.

In other ways, too, Talbott's sixteen articles about Israel in *Time* when he was on the staff of the magazine (1981-91) went far beyond the positions of Peres and his colleagues in the Israeli Labor party. Talbott denounced Israel for knocking out the Iraqi nuclear reactor and for striking at Arab terrorist targets in Lebanon. He called for reducing U.S. financial and military aid to Israel. He described Israel as "an outright liability to American security interests." He made barbed references to American Jews "wield[ing] influence beyond their numbers." He accused Israel's Prime Minister of being "obsessed" with the Holocaust. In article after article, he pointed to Israel as the source of a broad range of international conflicts in the Middle East and beyond.

Such views are completely at odds with traditional U.S. policy toward Israel, and should have disqualified Talbott from serving as Deputy Secretary of State. That is why the Zionist Organization of America led the nationwide campaign . . . opposing his nomination, which compelled him to recant his anti-Israel views during the Senate confirmation hearings—an important affirmation of the idea that hostility toward Israel is unacceptable in mainstream American politics. Of course, "confirmation conversions" like Talbott's are not very persuasive. As the ZOA pointed out at the time, it was difficult to accept the claim by Talbott's allies that his "conversion" was the result of his 1991 visit to Israel, especially since he wrote two more *Time* articles attacking Israel *after* that 1991 trip. . . .

MORTON A. KLEIN
National President
Zionist Organization of America
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I applaud David Bar-Illan's article. . . . On the day I read it, there appeared in the *New York Times* a report entitled "Rabin Urges Syria to Show the Israeli Public It Seeks Peace." This article portrayed an almost frantic call to Assad to give a positive response "lest the Israeli public conclude that it is fruitless to make accommodating gestures to Damascus." It concluded that "57 percent of Israelis do not support Mr. Rabin's statement that he would support removing settlements from the Golan Heights for the sake of peace." . . .

A peace process with people who do not want peace is well under way. I believe that an agreement with Syria to give up the Golan Heights at this time would place Israel in great jeopardy.

The situation is made more frightening by an American President who knows very little about structuring foreign policy. . . . This President is very hungry for any success in foreign affairs and, therefore, there could be great pressure put on Israel in the future to give up the Golan Heights without obtaining full assurances of peace from Syria and the world community. . . .

The people with whom Israel is negotiating are not strong and they cannot ensure peace, yet Israel continues to make concessions. . . .

PHILIP J. SCHILLER
Chicago, Illinois

Saul Bellow

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Reading Saul Bellow with a generational sensibility, as Hilton Kramer does in "Saul Bellow, Our Contemporary" [June], gets at the essence of Bellow's greatness as an American writer, but also reveals one of his limitations as a specifically *Jewish* writer.

Saul Bellow's generation of American Jews will remain unique. Their parents were European immigrants, and they themselves were the first sizable generation of Jews, or at most the second, to speak with American accents, and thus to be assimilable Americans. None of this can or will be repeated on anything approaching the scale it enjoyed throughout the middle of this century. The tension between Americanness and Jewishness proved remarkably fertile, intellectually speaking, and out of that generation came a number of first-rate writers and thinkers.

Then where is the limitation? One might begin by asking where Bellow's successors are. Writers of his generation had the opportunity—and the gifts—to give rise to something epochal: to replace the dying literature of Yiddish Europe with a Jewish literary culture on these shores. It may be too early to tell, but it appears that they did not. Their literary culture seems to be dying with them. One could blame this on succeeding generations, but it seems at least equally true that Bellow and his contemporaries set a bad example in one regard. As writers they concentrated almost solely on their historical moment as Americans, giving only short shrift to the other side of the equation, the culture that could transcend their historical moment—that is to say, their Jewishness. A common Jewish culture was the one thing that the next

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generation of young Jewish writers and critics could have built upon. Thus, the fact that writers of Saul Bellow's generation thought so little of their faith means that they may always be Hilton Kramer's contemporaries, but never mine.

Creating epochs is a difficult business, not something that we require of our writers, nor anything Saul Bellow apparently set out to do. But when one generation so easily dismisses its Jewish self, the effects of that decision ramify long after.

MARK MILLER
Washington Times
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his only play, *The Last Analysis*, Saul Bellow's protagonist, Bummidge, in the end is crucified on stage, with a difference: he is nailed to the cross with outsized staples. What are we to make of the fact that a man named "Staples," writing in the politically-corrected *New York Times*, accuses Bellow of racism in a style and context which Hilton Kramer believes have the intent and power to "incinerate" Bellow's reputation? For sure, it is an oddity—I suppose one has to rule out spoof—worthy of Bellow's cockamamie contemporary planet. . . .

After reading Mr. Kramer, John Ellis, and Joseph Epstein on the betrayal of . . . our finest current writer by the once-proud *Times* . . . , one wonders why decent and cultured people still subscribe to it.

ROBERT GREER COHN
Stanford, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was surprised by Hilton Kramer's critique of Saul Bellow for not taking more forceful stands on various political issues and for not incorporating such themes into his fiction.

One may first ask: is it not enough that Bellow is a great novelist? Must he also make political statements in his fiction? And must we also expect him to participate in public affairs?

Secondly, Bellow has in fact incorporated important sociopolitical themes into his fiction and has given numerous indications of where he stands regarding the trends and values which emerged during the past three decades and which rightly trouble Mr. Kramer, most readers of COMMENTARY, as well as this writer.

Mr. Sammler's Planet is not Bellow's only novel critical of the ethos of the 60's and the adversary culture. These critical themes were already present in *Herzog*, which portrayed many trends which became more pronounced in the years to follow.

Mr. Kramer suggests that after *Sammler* and *Humboldt's Gift*, Bellow became a writer "whose celebrity was now a refuge from experience and a barrier to any direct engagement with the world." This is not so, as illustrated most forcefully by *The Dean's December* (1982), to which Mr. Kramer makes no reference—a particularly serious omission in the context of his article. It is a novel which pulls no punches in examining certain aspects of the radical malaise in America, and especially what has come to be called political correctness, and liberal hypocrisy regarding race relations. It is a very courageous book, especially given the sensitivity of the race issue, and one that most certainly cannot be characterized as representing an avoidance of "direct engagement with the world." An engagement with the world, incidentally, was also in evidence in Bellow's nonfiction book, *To Jerusalem and Back* (1976), also not mentioned in the article.

A careful (or even hasty) reading of Bellow's fiction and nonfiction hardly gives the impression of a writer seeking a space between "disabused liberalism" and neoconservatism. But even if this were the case, we must be careful to avoid demanding from kindred spirits our own brand of political style or level of combativeness, which has its place and uses, and which Mr. Kramer admirably exemplifies.

PAUL HOLLANDER
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts

HILTON KRAMER writes:

It is difficult to know exactly what, in this context, Mark Miller means when he speaks of "a common Jewish culture" in the United States. (Does a "common Jewish culture" even exist in Israel today?) Among Jews in America, the very words "Jewish culture" mean different things to Jews of different generations, backgrounds, education, and experience. Some Jews are religious, but most—in my experience, anyway—are not. Yet we

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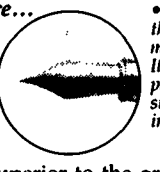

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remain Jews, all the same. We are felt to be Jews, and we are believed to be Jews—by ourselves and by others. And among those Jews who are religious, there are now so many ways of being religious that even religious Jews find it difficult to agree on what, apart from their identity as Jews, they share in the realm of religious belief. But I notice that Mr. Miller does not mention religion. He prefers the word "faith," which is no doubt less restrictive in the range of choices it offers.

As for what "a Jewish literary culture" written in English in the United States at the end of the 20th century would be likely to consist of, Mr. Miller does not say—and I cannot say, either. He should be more explicit about what he imagines this "Jewish literary culture" of the future would look like. He should not, in any case, expect Saul Bellow—or me, either, for that matter—to meet a standard that so far seems to exist only in his own imagination and desire.

If, as Mr. Miller suggests, "the tension between Americanness and Jewishness" has now been—for some of us, at least—radically diminished, as I believe it has, I welcome and applaud this development. It was to achieve such a relaxed level of tension in their lives and in the lives of their children—in other words, democratic freedom—that my parents immigrated to this country. I do not look back with nostalgia on the sufferings of the past, no matter what they may have contributed to Jewish cultural tradition. Nor should we forget that many of the Jewish immigrants of my parents' generation came to America in order to escape the restrictions of the Jewish traditions upon which they were raised. Would not that, too, have to be taken account of in any attempt to create a "Jewish literary culture" in the future?

I am amused by Robert Greer Cohn's reminder of the use to which "staples" are put in *The Last Analysis*, but only perplexed by Paul Hollander's benevolent misreading of my essay on Bellow.

Jewish Faith:
From Love Not Hate

Upcoming Television Program Needs Your Help

The New York Board of Rabbis would like to ask for your help with a national network television program. Many Jews today are pursuing their faith and identity around issues different from those that united them fifty years ago, after the Holocaust and its hateful challenge to Judaism. Using brief, videotaped first-person segments, we want to create a portrait of the spiritual searches as well as the steadfastness of Jewish life today.

You can help by sending us a few paragraphs describing your religious or cultural activities, your feelings or inner questions, and other pertinent background information. Your speedy response with a phone number where we might reach you is appreciated. We thank you in advance for sharing such an important part of yourself with us.

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Financing Farrakhan

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Arch Puddington's article, "Black Anti-Semitism & How It Grows" [April], offers perceptive insights into the susceptibility of certain black audiences to the recent outpouring of anti-Semitic propaganda. But the author makes no mention of the financial and other kinds of support Louis Farrakhan and others receive from radical Islamist governments and agencies for the specific purpose of conducting anti-Jewish campaigns.

This support provides an incentive to peddle anti-Jewish hate; for those hooked-in to this international network, anti-Semitism pays, and pays well—in power, influence, and cash.

Farrakhan has political, financial, and other ties to the regimes of Libya, Iran, Syria, and Sudan. Initially, he made no secret of them. In 1984, he visited Libya concurrently with Iranian leaders who promptly announced the formation of an international committee for the "defense of American blacks" and, a few months later, an "Islamic Movements Office" for propagandizing American blacks. In February 1985, via a special satellite hookup, Libya's leader, Muammar Qaddafi, addressed the annual conference of the Nation of Islam in Chicago and was introduced by Farrakhan as "a fellow struggler in the cause of liberation of our people, . . . a man the world does not understand." Soon after, Farrakhan announced the receipt of an interest-free "loan" of $5 million from Qaddafi.

Since then, much more has flowed to him from radical Islamist governments and organizations willing to overlook the eccentricities of his version of Islam so long as he continues to advance his vicious anti-Jewish campaign.

This information is neither secret nor speculative. Some of it has appeared in the press—the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Amsterdam News*, the *Chicago Tribune*—and in an Anti-Defamation-League report. Many details can be found in the recent book, *Target America*, by Yossef Bodansky, who directs the House Task Force on Terrorism. Recently, Farrakhan has become more circumspect about revealing his ties to the regimes that sponsor terrorism aimed at America and Israel, perhaps because his backers have been implicated in the World Trade Center bombing. Thus, he attempted to keep secret his visit as an official guest earlier this year to Sudan, a regime accused of involvement in the second Manhattan terrorist plot. But more than enough is already public to make the connections clear.

Yet when Farrakhan openly visits the radical Islamist states to meet with their rulers—as he has done repeatedly—the press reports his travels without comment; when he is interviewed, the question of his connections is not raised.

A black reporter who exposed some of his operations a few years ago was threatened with death. In April 1986, when Farrakhan went to Libya again, in violation of U.S. law, his aide Khalid Abdul Muhammad (of Kean College fame) threatened to "kill whites in the streets" if he was prosecuted for it. Such threats—backed by strong-arm squads, some of them trained in the Middle East—may explain, at least in part, the failure of responsible black leaders and the press to denounce Farrakhan, let alone even hint at his connections with radical Islamist regimes.

Intimidation does not, of course, explain the enthusiasm with which his message of hate is received by some. But whatever domestic factors may play into the hands of

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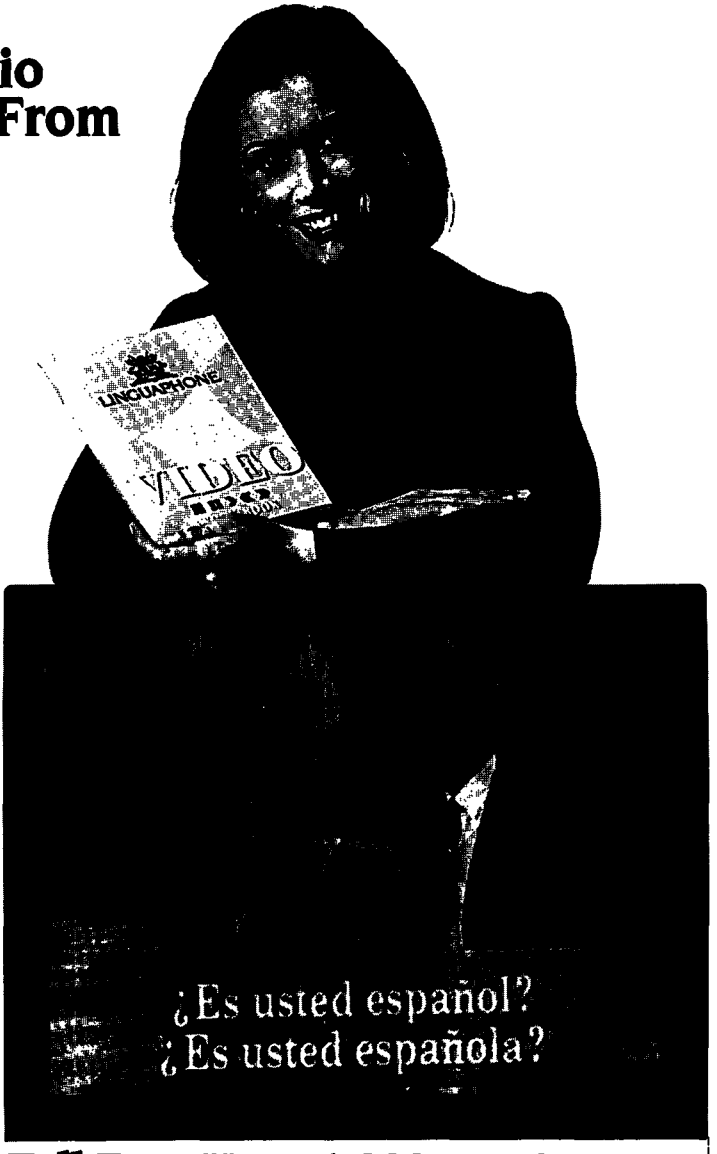

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those seeking to fan hatred, no serious attempt to come to grips with the problem can afford to overlook the fact that the current anti-Semitic campaign did not erupt accidentally or spontaneously—or to ignore what lies behind it.

ROSANNE KLASS
New York City

Marx & Mao

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Losing China Again" [April], Charles Horner cites a *New York Times Magazine* article reporting that Chinese people have said they "are nostalgic for the Cultural Revolution because it was so Chinese. . . ."

I have heard Chinese people, in China and the United States, saying that the cruelty and disorder brought about by Chairman Mao were typically Chinese. They are wrong. It is not part of Chinese tradition to close schools, beat up teachers, or report one's parents to the authorities for counterrevolutionary thoughts. What Mao did was not Chinese but Marxist.

Countries as different as Russia, Cuba, and China all developed the same architecture, the same "neighborhood committees," the same fear of thought. Stalin and Mao both engineered policies that led to catastrophic famine. It is no accident, comrade.

The Chinese honor Marx, even as they abandon socialism. It is easy for them to claim that the Chinese are by nature a cruel people, much easier than the alternative—admitting that it was Marx who led them to heckle and beat their neighbors and friends at "struggle sessions."

Marxism is not an economic system; it is a religion about an economic system. When the Chinese are able to question the words of Marx, the Communist party will lose its moral authority, and China will be not only free but unified.

Freedom is incompatible with Marxism. Karl Marx assumed that when the final stage of "communism" arrived, we would see the end of disagreement as well as the cessation of conflict of interest. Freedom has no content in a world without differences of opinion. There is, furthermore, an assumption in Marx that science will have been discovered during the capitalist stage of history. When the higher stage of "communism" is reached, says Marx, people will "rear cattle in the evening [and] criticize after dinner." In other words, there will be no specialization, and therefore no professionals and no need for education. Marx could oppose rights and individuality because he foresaw a society without the need for creativity.

Although Marxism has appealed to humanitarians who wish to see the end of inequality and injustice, every state ruled by the Communist party has been significantly inhumane. The ugliness of these regimes cannot simply be attributed to the philosophy of Lenin, and certainly cannot be explained by discussing such intellectual small fry as Stalin or Mao; it comes from the writings of Marx himself.

GEORGE JOCHNOWITZ
College of Staten Island
Staten Island, New York

CHARLES HORNER writes:

A perennial problem in thinking about non-Western societies is how to weigh the persistence of the traditional against the intrusion of the modern. Some Chinese, knowing the history of their country's experiences with social upheaval and religious millennialism, can indeed see "Chinese" aspects in an event like the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Similarly, those who introduced Western radicalism often tried to make it seem consistent with elements of the Chinese tradition (in the same way, one supposes, that American Communists tried to equate their doctrine with traditional American principles). In China, there is also a long tradition of peasant uprisings and Robin Hood-type outlawry with which contemporary would-be outcasts can identify, especially if they are artists and intellectuals. I suspect that it is this sort of pose which can be observed today. George Jochnowitz is no doubt right to observe that the introduction of Marxism and Leninism made things worse, but China, regrettably, was from time to time a brutally unpleasant place ages before it heard of either Marx or Mao.

Music & Recording

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Beethoven & the Pianists" [April], Samuel Lipman reminds us that today's recordings make musicians sound better than they are. The engineer is the modern player's necessary accomplice. This brings to mind the story of the pianist and the conductor listening to the playback of the concerto they have just finished recording. Let us suppose the concerto is the "Emperor." I imagine the conductor has a towel around his neck, but I have trouble picturing the pianist. Let us say he is looking eagerly for approval. The good news, the conductor tells him, is that the recording sounds great. The bad news is that we're playing the concerto next week in Carnegie Hall. I wonder if Mr. Lipman can tell us the identity of either one.

THOMAS PUTNAM
Buffalo, New York

SAMUEL LIPMAN writes:

The question is not whether I know who the artists involved are: the question is whether they know.

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PETIT PALAIS

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N.TARKHOFF - A RUSSIAN IMPRESSIONIST IN PARIS

The painter **Nicolas Tarkhoff** was born on 20th January 1871 in Moscow, and died in Paris on 5th June 1930 aged 59.
His studies were conducted in Moscow and made easier by the fact that his family were wealthy merchants. From the age of 24, he decided to study drawing and painting. After enrolling at the Moscow Academy of Art, he went to Paris in 1899 where he was appointed to the studios of I. P. Laurens and L. O. Merson. It must however be pointed out that before he left Russia, **Tarkhoff** exhibited paintings at the "World of Art" and "Union of Russian Painters", exhibitions where his talent was particulary noted.
Tarkhoff got married in 1905 and had three children. Highly talented, he was undoubtedly one of the greatest masters of his time with his very individual style. From 1900 he worked incessantly and painted many different subjects, such as avenues in movement, markets, "merry go round", streets scenes, people working, all giving great impression of crowds full of movement. His motherhoods are full of love. He was an inside and outside painter.
What is surprising is the "fauve" characteristics in **Tarkhoff's** work which from 1904 onwards was brightly colored like the typical works of the fauve movement. His paintings possess exceptional vigour, his palette is widely colored and of a particular quality that one finds throughout his "oeuvre". If **Tarkhoff** was not included in the group of fauve painters at the Salon of 1905, it was probably because he had only recently arrived in Paris and not yet knowing the artistic milieux, he could not participate in the salons.
He learnt about the arrangement of mass and perspective from Cézanne. As for his streets scenes, depicted at different times of the day or night - often full of people and horse-drawn vehicles from the turn of the century, he has treated them in a very characteristic manner. His sometimes empty landscapes and streets are brought to life and highlighted in an unexpected way, through his ability to make colors vibrate, like a composer uses seven notes to create the most dazzling effects and hymns praising the beauty of the world.
His fiery temperament shows itself in use of color, in his compositions, his still-lifes, his flowers, his "suns" full of dizzy light, his still lifes in flamboyant colors.
In 1909, an important art book "Peintres de Race" was written and published by Marius Leblond, whose aim was to evaluate the best artists of the time.
Complete chapters are devoted to fourteen artists from different countries, including **Van Gogh, Gauguin,** and **Tarkhoff.** The famous merchant **Ambroise Volard** promoted him and sold his works to the greatest collectors in France and abroad, such as **Stchoukine, Morosov, the Rotschild family** etc. The Gallery Druet held exhibitions of his work as did the marvellous Berthe Weill, a discoverer of great talents.
In 1911, **Tarkhoff** left Paris to retreat to the countryside near Orsay, a small village where he lived apart cutting all his contacts with his Paris galleries.
After his death in 1930, his family decided not to sell his works, but to keep them secretly for decades. This is the reason why **Tarkhoff** was forgotten until the Petit Palais learnt the existence of the collection and started to organize exhibitions all over the world, including at the **Puchkine museum in Moscow and in Saint-Petersburg.**

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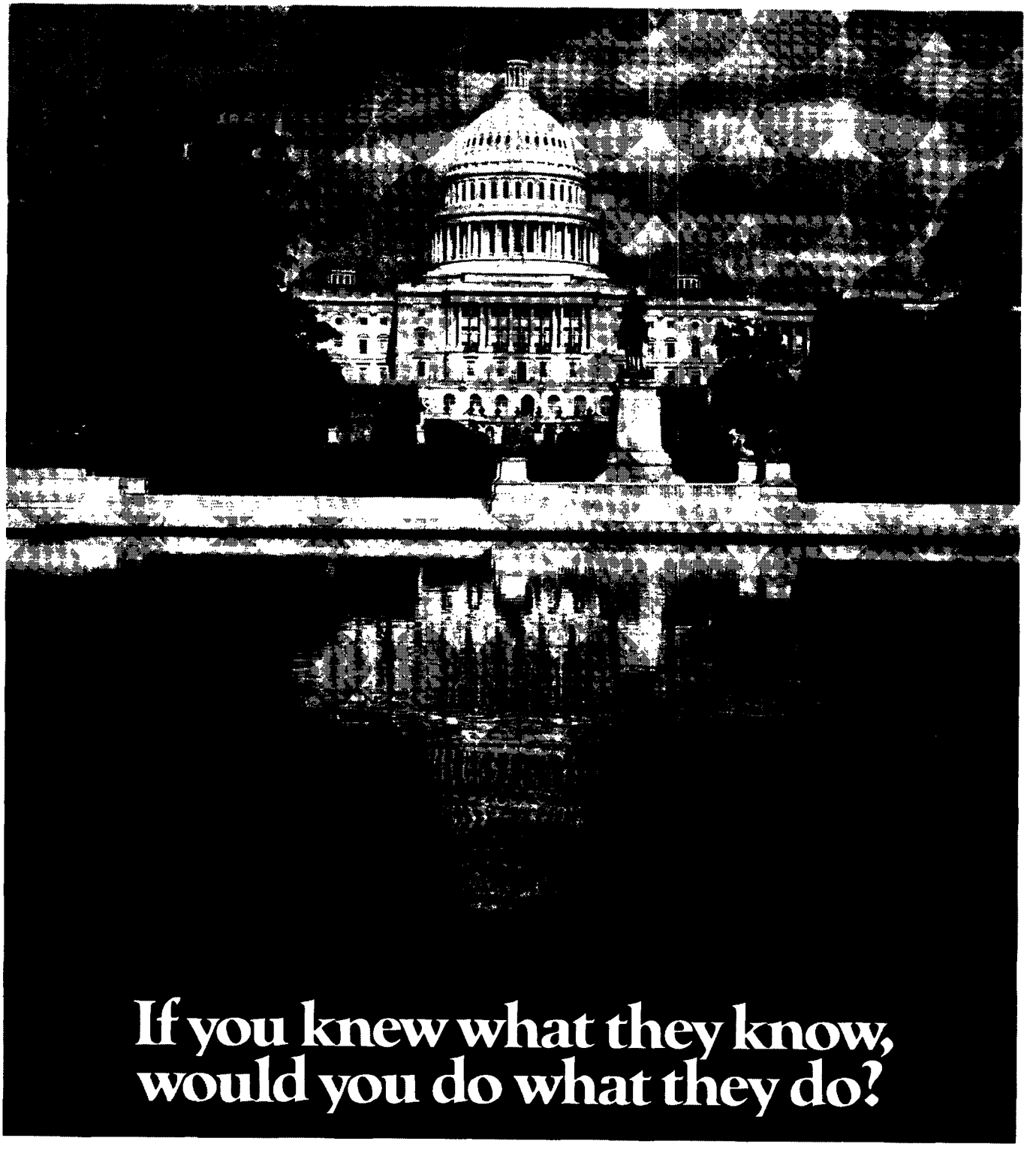

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What To Do About Crime

James Q. Wilson

Few of the major problems facing American society today are entirely new, but in recent years most of them have either taken new forms or reached new levels of urgency. To make matters more difficult, in many cases the solutions formerly relied upon have proved to be ineffective, leaving us so frustrated that we seize desperately on proposals which promise much but deliver little.

In the hope of bringing greater clarity to the understanding of these problems, and of framing workable solutions and policies, we are inaugurating this new series of articles. Like James Q. Wilson's below, each subsequent piece in the series will begin with a reexamination of a particular issue by a writer who has lived with and studied it for a long time and who will then proceed to suggest "What To Do About" it. Among those already scheduled for publication in the coming months are Charles Murray and Richard J. Herrnstein on welfare; Gertrude Himmelfarb on the universities; William J. Bennett on our children; Robert H. Bork on the First Amendment; and Richard Pipes on Russia.

JAMES Q. WILSON, *professor of management and public policy at UCLA, is the author of many books and articles on crime, including* Thinking about Crime; Varieties of Police Behavior; *and* Crime and Human Nature *(written with Richard J. Herrnstein). He is also the editor of* Crime and Public Policy *and co-editor, with Joan Petersilia, of* Crime *(forthcoming from ICS Press).*

WHEN the United States experienced the great increase in crime that began in the early 1960's and continued through the 1970's, most Americans were inclined to attribute it to conditions unique to this country. Many conservatives blamed it on judicial restraints on the police, the abandonment of capital punishment, and the mollycoddling of offenders; many liberals blamed it on poverty, racism, and the rise of violent television programs. Europeans, to the extent they noticed at all, referred to it, sadly or patronizingly, as the "American" problem, a product of our disorderly society, weak state, corrupt police, or imperfect welfare system.

Now, 30 years later, any serious discussion of crime must begin with the fact that, except for homicide, most industrialized nations have crime rates that resemble those in the United States. All the world is coming to look like America. In 1981, the burglary rate in Great Britain was much less than that in the United States; within six years the two rates were the same; today, British homes are more likely to be burgled than American ones. In 1980, the rate at which automobiles were stolen was lower in France than in the United States; today, the reverse is true. By 1984, the burglary rate in the Netherlands was nearly twice that in the United States. In Australia and Sweden certain forms of theft are more common than they are here. While property-crime rates were declining during most of the 1980's in the United States, they were rising elsewhere.[1]

America, it is true, continues to lead the industrialized world in murders. There can be little doubt that part of this lead is to be explained by the greater availability of handguns here. Arguments that once might have been settled with insults or punches are today more likely to be settled by shootings. But guns are not the whole story. Big American cities have had more homicides than comparable European ones for almost as long as anyone can find records. New York and Philadelphia have been more murderous than London since the early part of the 19th century. This country has had a violent history; with respect to murder, that seems likely to remain the case.

But except for homicide, things have been getting better in the United States for over a decade. Since 1980, robbery rates (as reported in victim surveys) have declined by 15 percent. And even with regard to homicide, there is relatively good news: in 1990, the rate at which adults killed one another was no higher than it was in 1980, and in many cities it was considerably lower.

This is as it was supposed to be. Starting

[1] These comparisons depend on official police statistics. There are of course errors in such data. But essentially the same pattern emerges from comparing nations on the basis of victimization surveys.

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around 1980, two things happened that ought to have reduced most forms of crime. The first was the passing into middle age of the postwar baby boom. By 1990, there were 1.5 million fewer boys between the ages of fifteen and nineteen than there had been in 1980, a drop that meant that this youthful fraction of the population fell from 9.3 percent to 7.2 percent of the total.

In addition, the great increase in the size of the prison population, caused in part by the growing willingness of judges to send offenders to jail, meant that the dramatic reductions in the costs of crime to the criminal that occurred in the 1960's and 1970's were slowly (and very partially) being reversed. Until around 1985, this reversal involved almost exclusively real criminals and parole violators; it was not until after 1985 that more than a small part of the growth in prison populations was made up of drug offenders.

Because of the combined effect of fewer young people on the street and more offenders in prison, many scholars, myself included, predicted a continuing drop in crime rates throughout the 1980's and into the early 1990's. We were almost right: crime rates did decline. But suddenly, starting around 1985, even as adult homicide rates were remaining stable or dropping, *youthful* homicide rates shot up.

Alfred Blumstein of Carnegie-Mellon University has estimated that the rate at which young males, ages fourteen to seventeen, kill people has gone up significantly for whites and incredibly for blacks. Between 1985 and 1992, the homicide rate for young white males went up by about 50 percent but for young black males it *tripled*.

The public perception that today's crime problem is different from and more serious than that of earlier decades is thus quite correct. Youngsters are shooting at people at a far higher rate than at any time in recent history. Since young people are more likely than adults to kill strangers (as opposed to lovers or spouses), the risk to innocent bystanders has gone up. There may be some comfort to be had in the fact that youthful homicides are only a small fraction of all killings, but given their randomness, it is not much solace.

THE United States, then, does not have *a* crime problem, it has at least two. Our high (though now slightly declining) rates of property crime reflect a profound, worldwide cultural change: prosperity, freedom, and mobility have emancipated people almost everywhere from those ancient bonds of custom, family, and village that once held in check both some of our better and many of our worst impulses. The power of the state has been weakened, the status of children elevated, and the opportunity for adventure expanded; as a consequence, we have experienced an explosion of artistic creativity, entrepreneurial zeal, political experimentation—and criminal activity. A global economy has integrated the markets for clothes, music, automobiles—and drugs.

There are only two restraints on behavior—morality, enforced by individual conscience or social rebuke, and law, enforced by the police and the courts. If society is to maintain a behavioral equilibrium, any decline in the former must be matched by a rise in the latter (or vice versa). If familial and traditional restraints on wrongful behavior are eroded, it becomes necessary to increase the legal restraints. But the enlarged spirit of freedom and the heightened suspicion of the state have made it difficult or impossible to use the criminal-justice system to achieve what custom and morality once produced.

This is the modern dilemma, and it may be an insoluble one, at least for the West. The Islamic cultures of the Middle East and the Confucian cultures of the Far East believe that they have a solution. It involves allowing enough liberty for economic progress (albeit under general state direction) while reserving to the state, and its allied religion, nearly unfettered power over personal conduct. It is too soon to tell whether this formula—best exemplified by the prosperous but puritanical city-state of Singapore—will, in the long run, be able to achieve both reproducible affluence and intense social control.

Our other crime problem has to do with the kind of felonies we have: high levels of violence, especially youthful violence, often occurring as part of urban gang life, produced disproportionately by a large, alienated, and self-destructive underclass. This part of the crime problem, though not uniquely American, is more important here than in any other industrialized nation. Britons, Germans, and Swedes are upset about the insecurity of their property and uncertain about what response to make to its theft, but if Americans only had to worry about their homes being burgled and their autos stolen, I doubt that crime would be the national obsession it has now become.

Crime, we should recall, was not a major issue in the 1984 presidential election and had only begun to be one in the 1988 contest; by 1992, it was challenging the economy as a popular concern and today it dominates all other matters. The reason, I think, is that Americans believe something fundamental has changed in our patterns of crime. They are right. Though we were unhappy about having our property put at risk, we adapted with the aid of locks, alarms, and security guards. But we are terrified by the prospect of innocent people being gunned down at random, without warning and almost without motive, by youngsters who afterward show us the blank, unremorseful faces of seemingly feral, presocial beings.

CRIMINOLOGY has learned a great deal about who these people are. In studies both here and abroad it has been estab-

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lished that about 6 percent of the boys of a given age will commit half or more of all the serious crime produced by all boys of that age. Allowing for measurement errors, it is remarkable how consistent this formula is—6 percent causes 50 percent. It is roughly true in places as different as Philadelphia, London, Copenhagen, and Orange County, California.

We also have learned a lot about the characteristics of the 6 percent. They tend to have criminal parents, to live in cold or discordant families (or pseudo-families), to have a low verbal-intelligence quotient and to do poorly in school, to be emotionally cold and temperamentally impulsive, to abuse alcohol and drugs at the earliest opportunity, and to reside in poor, disorderly communities. They begin their misconduct at an early age, often by the time they are in the third grade.

These characteristics tend to be found not only among the criminals who get caught (and who might, owing to bad luck, be an unrepresentative sample of all high-rate offenders), but among those who do not get caught but reveal their behavior on questionnaires. And the same traits can be identified in advance among groups of randomly selected youngsters, long before they commit any serious crimes—not with enough precision to predict which individuals will commit crimes, but with enough accuracy to be a fair depiction of the group as a whole.[2]

Here a puzzle arises: if 6 percent of the males causes so large a fraction of our collective misery, and if young males are less numerous than once was the case, why are crime rates high and rising? The answer, I conjecture, is that the traits of the 6 percent put them at high risk for whatever criminogenic forces operate in society. As the costs of crime decline or the benefits increase; as drugs and guns become more available; as the glorification of violence becomes more commonplace; as families and neighborhoods lose some of their restraining power—as all these things happen, almost all of us will change our ways to some degree. For the most law-abiding among us, the change will be quite modest: a few more tools stolen from our employer, a few more traffic lights run when no police officer is watching, a few more experiments with fashionable drugs, and a few more business deals on which we cheat. But for the least law-abiding among us, the change will be dramatic: they will get drunk daily instead of just on Saturday night, try PCP or crack instead of marijuana, join gangs instead of marauding in pairs, and buy automatic weapons instead of making zip guns.

A metaphor: when children play the schoolyard game of crack-the-whip, the child at the head of the line scarcely moves but the child at the far end, racing to keep his footing, often stumbles and falls, hurled to the ground by the cumulative force of many smaller movements back along the line. When a changing culture escalates criminality, the at-risk boys are at the end of the line, and the conditions of American urban life—guns, drugs, automobiles, disorganized neighborhoods—make the line very long and the ground underfoot rough and treacherous.

MUCH is said these days about preventing or deterring crime, but it is important to understand exactly what we are up against when we try. Prevention, if it can be made to work at all, must start very early in life, perhaps as early as the first two or three years, and given the odds it faces—childhood impulsivity, low verbal facility, incompetent parenting, disorderly neighborhoods—it must also be massive in scope. Deterrence, if it can be made to work better (for surely it already works to some degree), must be applied close to the moment of the wrongful act or else the present-orientedness of the youthful would-be offender will discount the threat so much that the promise of even a small gain will outweigh its large but deferred costs.

In this country, however, and in most Western nations, we have profound misgivings about doing anything that would give prevention or deterrence a chance to make a large difference. The family is sacrosanct; the family-preservation movement is strong; the state is a clumsy alternative. "Crime-prevention" programs, therefore, usually take the form of creating summer jobs for adolescents, worrying about the unemployment rate, or (as in the proposed 1994 crime bill) funding midnight basketball leagues. There may be something to be said for all these efforts, but crime prevention is not one of them. The typical high-rate offender is well launched on his career before he becomes a teenager or has ever encountered the labor market; he may like basketball, but who pays for the lights and the ball is a matter of supreme indifference to him.

Prompt deterrence has much to recommend it: the folk wisdom that swift and certain punishment is more effective than severe penalties is almost surely correct. But the greater the swiftness and certainty, the less attention paid to the procedural safeguards essential to establishing guilt. As a result, despite their good instincts for the right answers, most Americans, frustrated by the restraints (many wise, some foolish) on swiftness and certainty, vote for proposals to increase severity: if the penalty is 10 years, let us make it 20 or 30; if the penalty is life imprisonment, let us make it death; if the penalty is jail, let us make it caning.

Yet the more draconian the sentence, the less (on the average) the chance of its being imposed; plea bargains see to that. And the most draconian sentences will, of necessity, tend to fall on adult offenders nearing the end of their criminal careers and not on the young ones who are in their

[2] Female high-rate offenders are *much* less common than male ones. But to the extent they exist, they display most of these traits.

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criminally most productive years. (The peak ages of criminality are between sixteen and eighteen; the average age of prison inmates is ten years older.) I say "of necessity" because almost every judge will give first-, second-, or even third-time offenders a break, reserving the heaviest sentences for those men who have finally exhausted judicial patience or optimism.

Laws that say "three strikes and you're out" are an effort to change this, but they suffer from an inherent contradiction. If they are carefully drawn so as to target only the most serious offenders, they will probably have a minimal impact on the crime rate; but if they are broadly drawn so as to make a big impact on the crime rate, they will catch many petty repeat offenders who few of us think really deserve life imprisonment.

Prevention and deterrence, albeit hard to augment, at least are plausible strategies. Not so with many of the other favorite nostrums, like reducing the amount of violence on television. Televised violence may have some impact on criminality, but I know of few scholars who think the effect is very large. And to achieve even a small difference we might have to turn the clock back to the kind of programming we had around 1945, because the few studies that correlate programming with the rise in violent crime find the biggest changes occurred between that year and 1974. Another favorite, boot camp, makes good copy, but so far no one has shown that it reduces the rate at which the former inmates commit crimes.

Then, of course, there is gun control. Guns are almost certainly contributors to the lethality of American violence, but there is no politically or legally feasible way to reduce the stock of guns now in private possession to the point where their availability to criminals would be much affected. And even if there were, law-abiding people would lose a means of protecting themselves long before criminals lost a means of attacking them.

As for rehabilitating juvenile offenders, it has some merit, but there are rather few success stories. Individually, the best (and best-evaluated) programs have minimal, if any, effects; collectively, the best estimate of the crime-reduction value of these programs is quite modest, something on the order of 5 or 10 percent.[3]

WHAT, then, is to be done? Let us begin with policing, since law-enforcement officers are that part of the criminal-justice system which is closest to the situations where criminal activity is likely to occur.

It is now widely accepted that, however important it is for officers to drive around waiting for 911 calls summoning their help, doing that is not enough. As a supplement to such a reactive strategy—comprised of random preventive patrol and the investigation of crimes that have already occurred—many leaders and students of law enforcement now urge the police to be "proactive": to identify, with the aid of citizen groups, problems that can be solved so as to prevent criminality, and not only to respond to it. This is often called community-based policing; it seems to entail something more than feel-good meetings with honest citizens, but something less than allowing neighborhoods to assume control of the police function.

The new strategy might better be called problem-oriented policing. It requires the police to engage in *directed*, not random, patrol. The goal of that direction should be to reduce, in a manner consistent with fundamental liberties, the opportunity for high-risk persons to do those things that increase the likelihood of their victimizing others.

For example, the police might stop and pat down persons whom they reasonably suspect may be carrying illegal guns.[4] The Supreme Court has upheld such frisks when an officer observes "unusual conduct" leading him to conclude that "criminal activity may be afoot" on the part of a person who may be "armed and dangerous." This is all rather vague, but it can be clarified in two ways.

First, statutes can be enacted that make certain persons, on the basis of their past conduct and present legal status, subject to pat-downs for weapons. The statutes can, as is now the case in several states, make all probationers and parolees subject to nonconsensual searches for weapons as a condition of their remaining on probation or parole. Since three-fourths of all convicted offenders (and a large fraction of all felons) are in the community rather than in prison, there are on any given day over three million criminals on the streets under correctional supervision. Many are likely to become recidivists. Keeping them from carrying weapons will materially reduce the chances that they will rob or kill. The courts might also declare certain dangerous street gangs to be continuing criminal enterprises, membership in which constitutes grounds for police frisks.

Second, since I first proposed such a strategy, I have learned that there are efforts under way in public and private research laboratories to develop technologies that will permit the police to detect from a distance persons who are carrying concealed weapons on the streets. Should these efforts bear fruit, they will provide the police with the grounds for stopping, questioning, and patting down even persons not on probation or parole or obviously in gangs.

Whether or not the technology works, the po-

[3] Many individual programs involve so few subjects that a good evaluation will reveal no positive effect even if one occurs. By a technique called meta-analysis, scores of individual studies can be pooled into one mega-evaluation; because there are now hundreds or thousands of subjects, even small gains can be identified. The best of these meta-analyses, such as the one by Mark Lipsey, suggest modest positive effects.

[4] I made a fuller argument along these lines in "Just Take Away Their Guns," in the *New York Times Magazine*, March 20, 1994.

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lice can also offer immediate cash rewards to people who provide information about individuals illegally carrying weapons. Spending $100 on each good tip will have a bigger impact on dangerous gun use than will the same amount spent on another popular nostrum—buying back guns from law-abiding people.[5]

Getting illegal firearms off the streets will require that the police be motivated to do all of these things. But if the legal, technological, and motivational issues can be resolved, our streets can be made safer even without sending many more people to prison.

THE same directed-patrol strategy might help keep known offenders drug-free. Most persons jailed in big cities are found to have been using illegal drugs within the day or two preceding their arrest. When convicted, some are given probation on condition that they enter drug-treatment programs; others are sent to prisons where (if they are lucky) drug-treatment programs operate. But in many cities the enforcement of such probation conditions is casual or nonexistent; in many states, parolees are released back into drug-infested communities with little effort to ensure that they participate in whatever treatment programs are to be found there.

Almost everyone agrees that more treatment programs should exist. But what many advocates overlook is that the key to success is steadfast participation and many, probably most, offenders have no incentive to be steadfast. To cope with this, patrol officers could enforce random drug tests on probationers and parolees on their beats; failing to take a test when ordered, or failing the test when taken, should be grounds for immediate revocation of probation or parole, at least for a brief period of confinement.

The goal of this tactic is not simply to keep offenders drug-free (and thereby lessen their incentive to steal the money needed to buy drugs and reduce their likelihood of committing crimes because they are on a drug high); it is also to diminish the demand for drugs generally and thus the size of the drug market.

Lest the reader embrace this idea too quickly, let me add that as yet we have no good reason to think that it will reduce the crime rate by very much. Something akin to this strategy, albeit one using probation instead of police officers, has been tried under the name of "intensive-supervision programs" (ISP), involving a panoply of drug tests, house arrests, frequent surveillance, and careful records. By means of a set of randomized experiments carried out in fourteen cities, Joan Petersilia and Susan Turner, both then at RAND, compared the rearrest rates of offenders assigned to ISP with those of offenders in ordinary probation. There was no difference.

Still, this study does not settle the matter. For one thing, since the ISP participants were under much closer surveillance than the regular probationers, the former were bound to be caught breaking the law more frequently than the latter. It is thus possible that a higher fraction of the crimes committed by the ISP than of the control group were detected and resulted in a return to prison, which would mean, if true, a net gain in public safety. For another thing, "intensive" supervision was in many cases not all that intensive—in five cities, contacts with the probationers only took place about once a week, and for all cities drug tests occurred, on average, about once a month. Finally, there is some indication that participation in treatment programs was associated with lower recidivism rates.

Both anti-gun and anti-drug police patrols will, if performed systematically, require big changes in police and court procedures and a significant increase in the resources devoted to both, at least in the short run. (ISP is not cheap, and it will become even more expensive if it is done in a truly intensive fashion.) Most officers have at present no incentive to search for guns or enforce drug tests; many jurisdictions, owing to crowded dockets or overcrowded jails, are lax about enforcing the conditions of probation or parole. The result is that the one group of high-risk people over which society already has the legal right to exercise substantial control is often out of control, "supervised," if at all, by means of brief monthly interviews with overworked probation or parole officers.

Another promising tactic is to enforce truancy and curfew laws. This arises from the fact that much crime is opportunistic: idle boys, usually in small groups, sometimes find irresistible the opportunity to steal or the challenge to fight. Deterring present-oriented youngsters who want to appear fearless in the eyes of their comrades while indulging their thrill-seeking natures is a tall order. While it is possible to deter the crimes they commit by a credible threat of prompt sanctions, it is easier to reduce the chances for risky group idleness in the first place.

In Charleston, South Carolina, for example, Chief Reuben Greenberg instructed his officers to return all school-age children to the schools from which they were truant and to return all youngsters violating an evening-curfew agreement to their parents. As a result, groups of school-age children were no longer to be found hanging out in the shopping malls or wandering the streets late at night.

There has been no careful evaluation of these efforts in Charleston (or, so far as I am aware, in any other big city), but the rough figures are impressive—the Charleston crime rate in 1991 was about 25 percent lower than the rate in

[5] In Charleston, South Carolina, the police pay a reward to anyone identifying a student carrying a weapon to school or to some school event. Because many boys carry guns to school in order to display or brag about them, the motive to carry disappears once any display alerts a potential informer.

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South Carolina's other principal cities and, for most offenses (including burglaries and larcenies), lower than what that city reported twenty years earlier.

All these tactics have in common putting the police, as the criminologist Lawrence Sherman of the University of Maryland phrases it, where the "hot spots" are. Most people need no police attention except for a response to their calls for help. A small fraction of people (and places) need constant attention. Thus, in Minneapolis, *all* of the robberies during one year occurred at just 2 percent of the city's addresses. To capitalize on this fact, the Minneapolis police began devoting extra patrol attention, in brief but frequent bursts of activity, to those locations known to be trouble spots. Robbery rates evidently fell by as much as 20 percent and public disturbances by even more.

Some of the worst hot spots are outdoor drug markets. Because of either limited resources, a fear of potential corruption, or a desire to catch only the drug kingpins, the police in some cities (including, from time to time, New York) neglect street-corner dealing. By doing so, they get the worst of all worlds.

The public, seeing the police ignore drug dealing that is in plain view, assumes that they are corrupt whether or not they are. The drug kingpins, who are hard to catch and are easily replaced by rival smugglers, find that their essential retail distribution system remains intact. Casual or first-time drug users, who might not use at all if access to supplies were difficult, find access to be effortless and so increase their consumption. People who might remain in treatment programs if drugs were hard to get drop out upon learning that they are easy to get. Interdicting without merely displacing drug markets is difficult but not impossible, though it requires motivation which some departments lack and resources which many do not have.

The sheer number of police on the streets of a city probably has only a weak, if any, relationship with the crime rate; what the police do is more important than how many there are, at least above some minimum level. Nevertheless, patrols directed at hot spots, loitering truants, late-night wanderers, probationers, parolees, and possible gun carriers, all in addition to routine investigative activities, will require more officers in many cities. Between 1977 and 1987, the number of police officers declined in a third of the 50 largest cities and fell relative to population in many more. Just how far behind police resources have lagged can be gauged from this fact: in 1950 there was one violent crime reported for every police officer; in 1980 there were three violent crimes reported for every officer.

I HAVE said little so far about penal policy, in part because I wish to focus attention on those things that are likely to have the largest and most immediate impact on the quality of urban life. But given the vast gulf between what the public believes and what many experts argue should be our penal policy, a few comments are essential.

The public wants more people sent away for longer sentences; many (probably most) criminologists think we use prison too much and at too great a cost and that this excessive use has had little beneficial effect on the crime rate. My views are much closer to those of the public, though I think the average person exaggerates the faults of the present system and the gains of some alternative (such as "three strikes and you're out").

The expert view, as it is expressed in countless op-ed essays, often goes like this: "We have been arresting more and more people and giving them longer and longer sentences, producing no decrease in crime but huge increases in prison populations. As a result, we have become the most punitive nation on earth."

Scarcely a phrase in those sentences is accurate. The probability of being arrested for a given crime is lower today than it was in 1974. The amount of time served in state prison has been declining more or less steadily since the 1940's. Taking all crimes together, time served fell from 25 months in 1945 to 13 months in 1984. Only for rape are prisoners serving as much time today as they did in the 40's.

The net effect of lower arrest rates and shorter effective sentences is that the cost to the adult perpetrator of the average burglary fell from 50 days in 1960 to 15 days in 1980. That is to say, the chances of being caught and convicted, multiplied by the median time served if imprisoned, was in 1980 less than a third of what it had been in 1960.[6]

Beginning around 1980, the costs of crime to the criminal began to inch up again—the result, chiefly, of an increase in the proportion of convicted persons who were given prison terms. By 1986, the "price" of a given burglary had risen to 21 days. Also beginning around 1980, as I noted at the outset, the crime rate began to decline.

It would be foolhardy to explain this drop in crime by the rise in imprisonment rates; many other factors, such as the aging of the population and the self-protective measures of potential victims, were also at work. Only a controlled experiment (for example, randomly allocating prison terms for a given crime among the states) could hope to untangle the causal patterns, and happily the Constitution makes such experiments unlikely.

Yet it is worth noting that nations with different penal policies have experienced different

[6] I take these cost calculations from Mark Kleiman, *et al.*, "Imprisonment-to-Offense Ratios," Working Paper 89-06-02 of the Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (August 5, 1988).

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crime rates. According to David Farrington of Cambridge University, property-crime rates rose in England and Sweden at a time when both the imprisonment rate and time served fell substantially, while property-crime rates declined in the United States at a time when the imprisonment rate (but not time served) was increasing.

Though one cannot measure the effect of prison on crime with any accuracy, it certainly has some effects. By 1986, there were 55,000 more robbers in prison than there had been in 1974. Assume that each imprisoned robber would commit five such offenses per year if free on the street. This means that in 1986 there were 275,000 fewer robberies in America than there would have been had these 55,000 men been left on the street.

Nor, finally, does America use prison to a degree that vastly exceeds what is found in any other civilized nation. Compare the chance of going to prison in England and the United States if one is convicted of a given crime. According to Farrington, your chances were higher in England if you were found guilty of a rape, higher in America if you were convicted of an assault or a burglary, and about the same if you were convicted of a homicide or a robbery. Once in prison, you would serve a longer time in this country than in England for almost all offenses save murder.

James Lynch of American University has reached similar conclusions from his comparative study of criminal-justice policies. His data show that the chances of going to prison and the time served for homicide and robbery are roughly the same in the United States, Canada, and England.

OF LATE, drugs have changed American penal practice. In 1982, only about 8 percent of state-prison inmates were serving time on drug convictions. In 1987, that started to increase sharply; by 1994, over 60 percent of all federal and about 25 percent of all state prisoners were there on drug charges. In some states, such as New York, the percentage was even higher.

This change can be attributed largely to the advent of crack cocaine. Whereas snorted cocaine powder was expensive, crack was cheap; whereas the former was distributed through networks catering to elite tastes, the latter was mass-marketed on street corners. People were rightly fearful of what crack was doing to their children and demanded action; as a result, crack dealers started going to prison in record numbers.

Unfortunately, these penalties do not have the same incapacitative effect as sentences for robbery. A robber taken off the street is not replaced by a new robber who has suddenly found a market niche, but a drug dealer sent away is replaced by a new one because an opportunity has opened up.

We are left, then, with the problem of reducing the demand for drugs, and that in turn requires either prevention programs on a scale heretofore unimagined or treatment programs with a level of effectiveness heretofore unachieved. Any big gains in prevention and treatment will probably have to await further basic research into the biochemistry of addiction and the development of effective and attractive drug antagonists that reduce the appeal of cocaine and similar substances.[7]

In the meantime, it is necessary either to build much more prison space, find some other way of disciplining drug offenders, or both. There is very little to be gained, I think, from shortening the terms of existing non-drug inmates in order to free up more prison space. Except for a few elderly, nonviolent offenders serving very long terms, there are real risks associated with shortening the terms of the typical inmate.

Scholars disagree about the magnitude of those risks, but the best studies, such as the one of Wisconsin inmates done by John DiIulio of Princeton, suggest that the annual costs to society in crime committed by an offender on the street are probably twice the costs of putting him in a cell. That ratio will vary from state to state because states differ in what proportion of convicted persons is imprisoned—some states dip deeper down into the pool of convictees, thereby imprisoning some with minor criminal habits.

But I caution the reader to understand that there are no easy prison solutions to crime, even if we build the additional space. The state-prison population more than doubled between 1980 and 1990, yet the victimization rate for robbery fell by only 23 percent. Even if we assign all of that gain to the increased deterrent and incapacitative effect of prison, which is implausible, the improvement is not vast. Of course, it is possible that the victimization rate would have risen, perhaps by a large amount, instead of falling if we had not increased the number of inmates. But we shall never know.

Recall my discussion of the decline in the costs of crime to the criminal, measured by the number of days in prison that result, on average, from the commission of a given crime. That cost is vastly lower today than in the 1950's. But much of the decline (and since 1974, nearly all of it) is the result of a drop in the probability of being arrested for a crime, not in the probability of being imprisoned once arrested.

Anyone who has followed my writings on crime knows that I have defended the use of prison both to deter crime and incapacitate criminals. I continue to defend it. But we must recognize two facts. First, even modest additional reductions in

[7] I anticipate that at this point some readers will call for legalizing or decriminalizing drugs as the "solution" to the problem. Before telling me this, I hope they will read what I wrote on that subject in the February 1990 issue of COMMENTARY. I have not changed my mind.

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crime, comparable to the ones achieved in the early 1980's, will require vast increases in correctional costs and encounter bitter judicial resistance to mandatory sentencing laws. Second, America's most troubling crime problem—the increasingly violent behavior of disaffected and impulsive youth—may be especially hard to control by means of marginal and delayed increases in the probability of punishment.

Possibly one can make larger gains by turning our attention to the unexplored area of juvenile justice. Juvenile (or family) courts deal with young people just starting their criminal careers and with chronic offenders when they are often at their peak years of offending. We know rather little about how these courts work or with what effect. There are few, if any, careful studies of what happens, a result in part of scholarly neglect and in part of the practice in some states of shrouding juvenile records and proceedings in secrecy. Some studies, such as one by the *Los Angeles Times* of juvenile justice in California, suggest that young people found guilty of a serious crime are given sentences tougher than those meted out to adults.[8] This finding is so counter to popular beliefs and the testimony of many big-city juvenile-court judges that some caution is required in interpreting it.

There are two problems. The first lies in defining the universe of people to whom sanctions are applied. In some states, such as California, it may well be the case that a juvenile *found guilty of a serious offense* is punished with greater rigor than an adult, but many juveniles whose behavior ought to be taken seriously (because they show signs of being part of the 6 percent) are released by the police or probation officers before ever seeing a judge. And in some states, such as New York, juveniles charged with having committed certain crimes, including serious ones like illegally carrying a loaded gun or committing an assault, may not be fingerprinted. Since persons with a prior record are usually given longer sentences than those without one, the failure to fingerprint can mean that the court has no way of knowing whether the John Smith standing before it is the same John Smith who was arrested four times for assault and so ought to be sent away, or a different John Smith whose clean record entitles him to probation.

The second problem arises from the definition of a "severe" penalty. In California, a juvenile found guilty of murder does indeed serve a longer sentence than an adult convicted of the same offense—60 months for the former, 41 months for the latter. Many people will be puzzled by a newspaper account that defines five years in prison for murder as a "severe" sentence, and angered to learn that an adult serves less than four years for such a crime.

The key, unanswered question is whether prompt and more effective early intervention would stop high-rate delinquents from becoming high-rate criminals at a time when their offenses were not yet too serious. Perhaps early and swift, though not necessarily severe, sanctions could deter some budding hoodlums, but we have no evidence of that as yet.

For as long as I can remember, the debate over crime has been between those who wished to rely on the criminal-justice system and those who wished to attack the root causes of crime. I have always been in the former group because what its opponents depicted as "root causes"—unemployment, racism, poor housing, too little schooling, a lack of self-esteem—turned out, on close examination, not to be major causes of crime at all.

Of late, however, there has been a shift in the debate. Increasingly those who want to attack root causes have begun to point to real ones—temperament, early family experiences, and neighborhood effects. The sketch I gave earlier of the typical high-rate young offender suggests that these factors are indeed at the root of crime. The problem now is to decide whether any can be changed by plan and at an acceptable price in money and personal freedom.

If we are to do this, we must confront the fact that the critical years of a child's life are ages one to ten, with perhaps the most important being the earliest years. During those years, some children are put gravely at risk by some combination of heritable traits, prenatal insults (maternal drug and alcohol abuse or poor diet), weak parent-child attachment, poor supervision, and disorderly family environment.

If we knew with reasonable confidence which children were most seriously at risk, we might intervene with some precision to supply either medical therapy or parent training or (in extreme cases) to remove the child to a better home. But given our present knowledge, precision is impossible, and so we must proceed carefully, relying, except in the most extreme cases, on persuasion and incentives.

We do, however, know enough about the early causes of conduct disorder and later delinquency to know that the more risk factors exist (such as parental criminality and poor supervision), the greater the peril to the child. It follows that programs aimed at just one or a few factors are not likely to be successful; the children most at risk are those who require the most wide-ranging and fundamental changes in their life circumstances. The goal of these changes is, as Travis Hirschi of the University of Arizona has put it, to teach self-control.

Hirokazu Yoshikawa of New York University has recently summarized what we have learned about programs that attempt to make large and lasting changes in a child's prospects for improved con-

[8] "A Nation's Children in Lock-up," *Los Angeles Times*, August 22, 1993.

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duct, better school behavior, and lessened delinquency. Four such programs in particular seemed valuable—the Perry Preschool Project in Ypsilanti, Michigan; the Parent-Child Development Center in Houston, Texas; the Family Development Research Project in Syracuse, New York; and the Yale Child Welfare Project in New Haven, Connecticut.

All these programs had certain features in common. They dealt with low-income, often minority, families; they intervened during the first five years of a child's life and continued for between two and five years; they combined parent training with preschool education for the child; and they involved extensive home visits. All were evaluated fairly carefully, with the follow-ups lasting for at least five years, in two cases for at least ten, and in one case for fourteen. The programs produced (depending on the project) less fighting, impulsivity, disobedience, restlessness, cheating, and delinquency. In short, they improved self-control.

They were experimental programs, which means that it is hard to be confident that trying the same thing on a bigger scale in many places will produce the same effects. A large number of well-trained and highly motivated caseworkers dealt with a relatively small number of families, with the workers knowing that their efforts were being evaluated. Moreover, the programs operated in the late 1970's or early 1980's before the advent of crack cocaine or the rise of the more lethal neighborhood gangs. A national program mounted under current conditions might or might not have the same result as the experimental efforts.

Try telling that to lawmakers. What happens when politicians encounter experimental successes is amply revealed by the history of Head Start: they expanded the program quickly without assuring quality, and stripped it down to the part that was the most popular, least expensive, and easiest to run, namely, preschool education. Absent from much of Head Start are the high teacher-to-child case loads, the extensive home visits, and the elaborate parent training—the very things that probably account for much of the success of the four experimental programs.

IN THIS country we tend to separate programs designed to help children from those that benefit their parents. The former are called "child development," the latter "welfare reform." This is a great mistake. Everything we know about long-term welfare recipients indicates that their children are at risk for the very problems that child-helping programs later try to correct.

The evidence from a variety of studies is quite clear: even if we hold income and ethnicity constant, children (and especially boys) raised by a single mother are more likely than those raised by two parents to have difficulty in school, get in trouble with the law, and experience emotional and physical problems.[9] Producing illegitimate children is not an "alternative life-style" or simply an imprudent action; it is a curse. Making mothers work will not end the curse; under current proposals, it will not even save money.

The absurdity of divorcing the welfare problem from the child-development problem becomes evident as soon as we think seriously about what we want to achieve. Smaller welfare expenditures? Well, yes, but not if it hurts children. More young mothers working? Probably not; young mothers ought to raise their young children, and work interferes with that unless *two* parents can solve some difficult and expensive problems.

What we really want is *fewer illegitimate children*, because such children, by being born out of wedlock are, except in unusual cases, being given early admission to the underclass. And failing that, we want the children born to single (and typically young and poor) mothers to have a chance at a decent life.

Letting teenage girls set up their own households at public expense neither discourages illegitimacy nor serves the child's best interests. If they do set up their own homes, then to reach those with the fewest parenting skills and the most difficult children will require the kind of expensive and intensive home visits and family-support programs characteristic of the four successful experiments mentioned earlier.

One alternative is to tell a girl who applies for welfare that she can only receive it on condition that she live either in the home of *two* competent parents (her own if she comes from an intact family) or in a group home where competent supervision and parent training will be provided by adults unrelated to her. Such homes would be privately managed but publicly funded by pooling welfare checks, food stamps, and housing allowances.

A model for such a group home (albeit one run without public funds) is the St. Martin de Porres House of Hope on the south side of Chicago, founded by two nuns for homeless young women, especially those with drug-abuse problems. The goals of the home are clear: accept personal responsibility for your lives and learn to care for your children. And these goals, in turn, require the girls to follow rules, stay in school, obey a curfew, and avoid alcohol and drugs. Those are the rules that ought to govern a group home for young welfare mothers.

Group homes funded by pooled welfare benefits would make the task of parent training much easier and provide the kind of structured, consistent, and nurturant environment that children need. A few cases might be too difficult for these homes, and for such children, boarding schools—

[9] I summarize this evidence in "The Family-Values Debate," COMMENTARY, April 1993.

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once common in American cities for disadvantaged children, but now almost extinct—might be revived.

Group homes also make it easier to supply quality medical care to young mothers and their children. Such care has taken on added importance in recent years with discovery of the lasting damage that can be done to a child's prospects from being born prematurely and with a very low birth weight, having a mother who has abused drugs or alcohol, or being exposed to certain dangerous metals. Lead poisoning is now widely acknowledged to be a source of cognitive and behavioral impairment; of late, elevated levels of manganese have been linked to high levels of violence.[10] These are all treatable conditions; in the case of a manganese imbalance, easily treatable.

MY FOCUS on changing behavior will annoy some readers. For them the problem is poverty and the worst feature of single-parent families is that they are inordinately poor. Even to refer to a behavioral or cultural problem is to "stigmatize" people.

Indeed it is. Wrong behavior—neglectful, immature, or incompetent parenting; the production of out-of-wedlock babies—*ought* to be stigmatized. There are many poor men of all races who do not abandon the women they have impregnated, and many poor women of all races who avoid drugs and do a good job of raising their children. If we fail to stigmatize those who give way to temptation, we withdraw the rewards from those who resist them. This becomes all the more important when entire communities, and not just isolated households, are dominated by a culture of fatherless boys preying on innocent persons and exploiting immature girls.

We need not merely stigmatize, however. We can try harder to move children out of those communities, either by drawing them into safe group homes or facilitating (through rent supplements and housing vouchers) the relocation of them and their parents to neighborhoods with intact social structures and an ethos of family values.

Much of our uniquely American crime problem (as opposed to the worldwide problem of general thievery) arises, not from the failings of individuals but from the concentration in disorderly neighborhoods of people at risk of failing. That concentration is partly the result of prosperity and freedom (functioning families long ago seized the opportunity to move out to the periphery), partly the result of racism (it is harder for some groups to move than for others), and partly the result of politics (elected officials do not wish to see settled constituencies broken up).

I SERIOUSLY doubt that this country has the will to address either of its two crime problems, save by acts of individual self-protection. We could in theory make justice swifter and more certain, but we will not accept the restrictions on liberty and the weakening of procedural safeguards that this would entail. We could vastly improve the way in which our streets are policed, but some of us will not pay for it and the rest of us will not tolerate it. We could alter the way in which at-risk children experience the first few years of life, but the opponents of this—welfare-rights activists, family preservationists, budget cutters, and assorted ideologues—are numerous and the bureaucratic problems enormous.

Unable or unwilling to do such things, we take refuge in substitutes: we debate the death penalty, we wring our hands over television, we lobby to keep prisons from being built in our neighborhoods, and we fall briefly in love with trendy nostrums that seem to cost little and promise much.

Much of our ambivalence is on display in the 1994 federal crime bill. To satisfy the tough-minded, the list of federal offenses for which the death penalty can be imposed has been greatly enlarged, but there is little reason to think that executions, as they work in this country (which is to say, after much delay and only on a few offenders), have any effect on the crime rate and no reason to think that executing more federal prisoners (who account, at best, for a tiny fraction of all homicides) will reduce the murder rate. To satisfy the tender-minded, several billion dollars are earmarked for prevention programs, but there is as yet very little hard evidence that any of these will actually prevent crime.

In adding more police officers, the bill may make some difference—but only if the additional personnel are imaginatively deployed. And Washington will pay only part of the cost initially and none of it after six years, which means that any city getting new officers will either have to raise its own taxes to keep them on the force or accept the political heat that will arise from turning down "free" cops. Many states also desperately need additional prison space; the federal funds allocated by the bill for their construction will be welcomed, provided that states are willing to meet the conditions set for access to such funds.

Meanwhile, just beyond the horizon, there lurks a cloud that the winds will soon bring over us. The population will start getting younger again. By the end of this decade there will be a million more people between the ages of fourteen and seventeen than there are now. Half of this extra million will be male. Six percent of them will become high-rate, repeat offenders—30,000 more muggers, killers, and thieves than we have now.

Get ready.

[10] It is not clear why manganese has this effect, but we know that it diminishes the availability of a precursor of serotonin, a neurotransmitter, and low levels of serotonin are now strongly linked to violent and impulsive behavior.

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Next Year in (a Divided?) Jerusalem

David Bar-Illan

WHAT irritated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin most about the demonstrations against him this past July was not the epithets "murderer" and "traitor" shouted by a few hotheads. Such mindless name-calling could be dismissed as the kind of verbal violence expected of a frustrated opposition. It was, rather, the charge of insincerity on the issue of Jerusalem, delivered by speaker after speaker, which made Rabin livid. To accuse him of being prepared to compromise on the indivisibility of Jerusalem, he said, was not only a flagrant falsehood; it damaged Israel's cause by imparting the impression that there was no national consensus on the matter.

On the face of it, Rabin's indignation is understandable. After all, he and every other major Labor-party figure have dutifully repeated the government's catechism on Jerusalem in virtually every speech before domestic and foreign audiences alike: "Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the state of Israel. It will remain, undivided, under Israeli sovereignty." To suggest that they do not mean this is to accuse them not only of hypocrisy but of betraying a fundamental article of faith.

Nor is Rabin—who was an officer in the Palmach brigade which fought to lift the siege of Jerusalem in 1948 and who then served as Chief of the General Staff in 1967 when the Old City was liberated from Jordanian occupation—above using his own past to make the point. In one recent speech he said: "My entire life has centered around Jerusalem. I was born there, I fought there, and now 46 years later, I remember each day, each moment, and each flame from within the armored cars on the road to the besieged city." In a later speech, he made the issue even more personal: "I did more to liberate the city than Bibi [Benjamin] Netanyahu and Ehud Olmert have ever done." (In 1967, Netanyahu, now the leader of Likud, and Olmert, also a member of Likud and now the mayor of Jerusalem, were about twenty years old.)

Skeptics may cavil that another Labor-party pledge—"we'll never leave the Golan"—was also inviolable until it ceased to be so. But others insist that the issues are dissimilar. For all its strategic essentiality, the Golan does not possess the quasi-mystical meaning of Jerusalem, a meaning which transcends differences between hawks and doves, the religious and secular, Right and Left, and even Zionists and non-Zionists. If there is one issue on which Rabin cannot retreat—so this school of thought believes—it is Jerusalem.

Yet to Rabin-watchers, including some of his fiercest supporters, his vehemence on the subject of Jerusalem seems suspiciously like a case of protesting too much. For example, the *Ha'aretz* columnist Dan Margalit (who discovered Mrs. Rabin's illegal New York bank account in 1977 and thereby precipitated her husband's downfall as Prime Minister the first time around, but who is now a consistent Rabin booster) warned that Rabin's overreaction was ill-advised, that it created the impression he had something to hide.

Margalit's unease is not baseless. Israelis have learned that the more vocally the government proclaims a particular "red line" uncrossable, the more likely it is to be crossed.

SUCH anxiety is exacerbated by other familiar symptoms. As in the case of the Rabin government's declared willingness to withdraw from the Golan, or its recognition of the PLO, or its implicit readiness to accept the establishment of a Palestinian state on the 1949 armistice lines—all Labor taboos and red lines until 1992—the ground for withdrawal in Jerusalem is being prepared by a relentless campaign. Dovish opinion-shapers both in Israel and abroad, feeling vindicated by the Oslo and Cairo agreements with the PLO, have been bombarding the media with articles and commentaries intended to prove that Jerusalem has never really been successfully unified, that the long-suffering Palestinians have been mistreated in the city, that they deserve half of it, and that a redivision will guarantee peace.

Typical of these is a recent article in the *Washington Post* by Gershon Baskin, international director of the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information. Claiming that the 95-percent consensus in Israel for keeping Jerusalem undivided is an illusion, Baskin insists that the real consensus is for separation.

Israelis, he writes, believe that Jerusalem

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should never be *physically* divided, that it must remain an "open city with free access throughout its boundaries for all." But what they want most is personal security. ("No one should have to fear getting a knife in his back in any part of the city.") They do not want to relinquish the new Jewish neighborhoods built in 1967 on land formerly occupied by Jordan, and they want the Jewish holy places (not including the Temple Mount, which Baskin calls by its Arabic name, Haram) to remain under Israeli control. But they also do not care about ruling over the eastern half of the city.

To "prove" his thesis, Baskin asserts that almost no Israelis could name the 22 neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, containing 150,000 Arab residents, and that they very seldom visit there. He also adds a blatant untruth—and an insult to one of Israel's leading doves, the former mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek—by stating that "since 1967 the Jerusalem municipality has invested nothing in these neighborhoods." (Kollek asserts that the city has spent "no less money on the Arab part of the city than on the Jewish section," which means three times as much per capita.)

In fact, the improvement in the standard of living and the increase in municipal services for Jerusalem's Arab inhabitants have been dramatic under Israeli rule. Life expectancy has increased by fifteen years; electric, water, and plumbing services, scarce under the neglectful Jordanians, now reach virtually every Arab home. The most opulent new houses in Jerusalem belong to Arabs. The largest, most modern health clinic in the city has been built in the Arab neighborhood of Sheikh Jarah, a few hundred yards from where 70 doctors and nurses in a medical convoy to the Hadassah hospital on Mount Scopus were slaughtered by terrorists in the 1948 war. This clinic is serviced by Arab doctors trained at the Hadassah medical center.

For advocates of redivision all this is irrelevant. If Jerusalem is to become "one city living in peace," says Baskin, the arrangement must be to "let Israel rule over Israeli Jerusalem and let Palestine rule over Palestinian Jerusalem."

This idea is echoed by Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin, whose pronouncements almost infallibly foreshadow government policies. Speaking to the B'nai B'rith organization in Washington a few months ago, Beilin said that the Palestinians should have "their own elected administration" in their parts of the city. "But," he was quick to assure his audience, "this does not mean that the city must again be divided."

Yasir Arafat's notorious speech in Johannesburg, in which he revealed the existence of a "Jerusalem letter" from Foreign Minister Shimon Peres that assured the continued activities of national Palestinian institutions in the city, added to the general skepticism about the government's intentions. That these intentions might be less than honorable seemed to be further confirmed when the government indignantly denied the letter existed. Worse yet, when the text was finally released, it proved more damaging than expected. Referring to the annexed part of the city as a separate entity—"East Jerusalem"—Peres promised not only "not to hamper the activity of all the Palestinian institutions" in it, but to encourage the fulfillment of their "important mission."

ON THEIR side, the Palestinians have addressed the Jerusalem issue with the kind of sophistication one has come to expect of them. Their offensive, a successful imitation of Zionist techniques under the British Mandate, has consisted of establishing "facts on the ground" while pursuing a public-relations campaign breathtaking in its scope and boldness.

Unobtrusively opening offices, agencies, services, and communication centers, they have created over the last few years a quasi-governmental network in the city's Arab neighborhoods. These offices are not restricted to Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction of the PLO. Opponents of the agreement with Israel like the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, as well as the radical Islamic movement, Hamas, also have offices in town. Orient House—a mansion owned by Arafat's local surrogate, Faisal Husseini—occupies a central place in this network, functioning as the unofficial Foreign Ministry of the nascent Palestinian state.

American pressure made it impossible even for the Likud government under Yitzhak Shamir to do anything about all this. It was only the advent of self-rule in Gaza and Jericho—and pressure from the opposition as well as from its own ranks—that prompted the Rabin government to pass legislation in July prohibiting such activity in Jerusalem. Whether Husseini and his people will obey the new law depends mostly on the conduct of foreign powers.

Up until now, however, those powers, all favoring the creation of a Palestinian capital in Jerusalem, have willingly collaborated in treating the Palestinian offices as government agencies. Obeying Palestinian instructions, a visiting head of state usually requests that his own ambassador in Israel and the Israeli Foreign-Ministry official assigned to accompany him leave his entourage before he enters the area in which the Palestinian offices are located. The Israeli flag on his car is exchanged for a PLO flag, and Israeli security personnel are replaced by PLO bodyguards belonging to a special security-service unit under Faisal Husseini's command, which imposes its own law on the Arab inhabitants. (Some of these PLO bodyguards have been charged by the Israeli police with the unauthorized arrest and torture of local Arabs.)

Indeed, virtually no foreign power recognizes Israeli sovereignty in any part of Jerusalem, let

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alone in the eastern half. (Thus, an American born anywhere in Jerusalem has only the city's name noted in his birth certificate and passport. No country is named.) All the major powers have special consulates assigned to Jerusalem, and these regard themselves as embassies to "Palestine," rather than consular offices in Israel.

The American consulate in Jerusalem, for example, does not report to the U.S. ambassador in Tel Aviv but directly to the State Department. That the U.S. considers the eastern part of Jerusalem "occupied territory" has been made clear by its voting at the UN (most recently following the Hebron massacre) for resolutions which define the city as "occupied." The only difference this year was that the Israeli government acquiesced in the vote on Hebron and dissuaded American Jewish organizations from combating it, despite the opposition of 83 U.S. Senators to the resolution.

The PLO drive to establish a *de-facto* division of Jerusalem has been accompanied by an intensive propaganda campaign. Its purpose is twofold: to convince the Israeli public that peace is unthinkable unless Jerusalem becomes the capital of the Palestinian state; and to persuade the world that the legitimacy of the religious, cultural, national, and ethnic claims of the Palestinians to Jerusalem is far greater than that of the Jewish claims.

To achieve the first goal, every PLO official, from Arafat on down, keeps warning that the armed struggle will resume with unprecedented intensity, and that no "final-status" settlement is possible unless Jerusalem is "shared." That the operative word is "shared," not "divided," is a measure of the campaign's sophistication. The Berlin Wall—and, for those who still remember, the fences of pre-1967 Jerusalem—have given divided cities a bad name.

The implication is not only that "sharing" will not entail a true division, but that if Israelis refuse it, they will stand exposed as greedy and selfish. Advocating "sharing," Faisal Husseini says, "I'd hate to see Jerusalem divided by walls." Other PLO officials follow the same formula: the city should remain united and open, but it should house two municipalities and two governments: "A Knesset on one hill and a Palestinian parliament on another," as the PLO's London representative, Atif Safieh, has put it.

But the most breathtaking component of the Palestinians' propaganda campaign is the "historical" structure they have built to bolster their claim to the city.

Here, for instance, is an entry in the *Palestinian Encyclopedia* (Vol II, p. 667, Beirut 1978 ed.): "Jerusalem is an Arab city because its first builders were the Canaanite Jebusites, whose descendants are the Palestinians. Ever since the destruction of the Temple, the link with Jews and Christians has been severed. Muslims alone have a right to the Temple." Another entry has it that "The Palestinians are the descendants of the Jebusites, who are of Arab origin."

Writing to the *Jerusalem Post* (September 7, 1990), Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan described a letter he had received from the Beit Sahur Committee—a Palestinian group devoted to publicizing the truth about the situation in the Middle East:

> Their letter was in response to the legislation I introduced acknowledging a united Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The committee wrote to assure me that "an in-depth analysis" of the "historical past" reveals that Jerusalem is of great significance and utmost importance to Christians and Muslims but was never of religious, political, or historical significance to the Prophet Moses or the Jewish people.
>
> Jerusalem, we are told, was "founded by the Canaanites in 1800 B.C.E." and ruled by "Jebusites for 800 years" until it was "captured by David who proclaimed himself King of Israel. The kingdom of Judah saw its destruction 73 years later by the Babylonians."
>
> It gets better. The Canaanites, we are told, "are the ancestors of Palestinians of today" while "historians confirm" that "the Jews who came to Palestine in our time are converts to Judaism from several races and regions of the world and possess no racial link to the original Israelis" who were "killed or deported" by the Romans.

Such palpable nonsense would have been dismissed as childish fantasies at any other time in modern history. (The Jebusites, a Hurrian tribe that ruled in the area that is today northern Syria and western Iraq, were in no way related to the nomads of the Arabian peninsula, from whom the Arabs emerged 1,600 years later. Nor can the Palestinians have it both ways. They can either be descendants of the Canaanites or the land's Arab occupiers, but not both.) Yet at a time when "multicultural" myths pass for history, stories which would embarrass Scheherezade become accepted wisdom.

Thus, the *Webster's New World Encyclopedia* (1992) has accepted without question the myth that "The Palestinian people are descendants of the people of Canaan." And swept off its rational feet by the same witless mythology, *National Geographic* (circulation ten million) has featured a lengthy article by the American journalist Tad Szulc containing similarly ludicrous "facts" about Palestinian origins: "The ancestors of today's Palestinians appeared along the southeastern Mediterranean coast more than five millennia ago . . . the Philistines are among their forebears." (Actually, the Philistines, invaders from Crete, were neither Semites nor Arabs. They and all other tribes which settled along the coast disappeared more than 1,000 years before the Arab invasion of the area.)

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The *Jerusalem Post* columnist Teddy Preuss could not resist a little send-up of these claims:

> Our forefather Abraham was a Palestinian (it is a fact that he is buried in Hebron), as were his son, his grandson, and the Twelve Tribes of Palestine from Reuben to Benjamin. The Levites were no more than the first muezzins, kadis, and priests. Like them, Noah and his three sons were Palestinians (one of them being called Shem, the father of the Palestinians), as were Cain and Abel and Adam and Eve. Only the Serpent was a Zionist!

It is now more than a decade since Arafat revealed that Jesus, too, was a Palestinian. (Palestine is, of course, never mentioned in the New Testament. The Romans named the country Palestine, after the Jews' biblical enemies, only after the destruction of the Temple and the suppression of the last Jewish rebellions.) This insult to the intelligence, when parroted by the PLO's Hanan Ashrawi at the Madrid conference in 1990, brought cheers from hundreds of mesmerized journalists. And media "experts" have kept on repeating the falsities that Jerusalem is not only the third holiest city to Muslims, but that it is "the cradle of Islam," a place of Islamic pilgrimage, and the ancient capital of Arab Palestine.

An innocent observer bombarded by these myths could hardly be blamed for deeming the presence of Jews in the country—let alone their claim to Jerusalem—as nothing more than an invasive irritation. For according to the version of history now accepted by some of the most respectable authorities, Jews were but one insignificant tribe which for a short period ruled a small part of the Palestinian land 3,000 years ago.

ISRAEL has done little to counter this propaganda. If anything, government-issued literature has abetted some of the Arab claims by referring to Jerusalem as equally sacred to all three religions, and often featuring the Dome of the Rock as the symbol of the city.

Moreover, most Israelis, fashionably ignorant of their own history, are ill-equipped to combat the assault on their rights to Jerusalem. Few know that since the reign of King David, the only nation of which Jerusalem has been the capital is the Jewish nation. (It served as a capital of the Crusader kingdom for 87 years, but the Crusaders were not a nation.) Even fewer Israelis know that the Jews are the only people who have inhabited Jerusalem continuously—with relatively short interruptions imposed by bans of conquerors—for 3,000 years, and that since 438 C.E. (200 years before the Muslim conquest) there has been an unbroken Jewish presence in Jerusalem. As early as 1820, Jews constituted the largest ethnic group in the city, and by the end of the 19th century they had become an absolute majority—a position they have kept for 100 years.

As for the role Jerusalem occupies in Jewish consciousness, it is unique in the annals of mankind. There is no equivalent in any culture for prayers, some of them going all the way back to biblical times, such as "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning" and others scarcely less ancient, such as "Next year in Jerusalem."

Conversely, the impression of long, continuous Arab rule over Jerusalem is a myth. *Arabs* ruled it only immediately following the conquest in 638 C.E. The Muslim rulers who quickly succeeded them were Kurds, Seljuks, Mamluks, and Turks, not Arabs. None made Jerusalem their capital and almost all treated the city with shocking neglect.

The two mosques on the Temple Mount are impressive structures, but they were built mostly to compete with the legendary glory of the Jewish Second Temple and the Christian Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Considered by the faithful a religion which superseded Judaism and Christianity, Islam could not let the holy places of those two faiths outshine Muslim shrines within its realm.

Nor is there any truth in the notion of Islamic religious tolerance. Jews and Christians were persecuted almost consistently under Islamic rule, a fact to which travelers testified in almost every century. That only the advent of Zionism begat Arab hostility to Jews is, then, just another lie. And the religious overtones of the hostility to Jews were never more apparent than when, after 1948, the Jordanian occupiers, the soldiers of the same Hashemite kingdom now hailed as a paragon of virtue and peace, destroyed all 58 ancient synagogues in the Old City.

When the Temple Mount mosques were erected, there was no reference to Jerusalem as the third holiest place to Islam. The city, mentioned 657 times in the Hebrew Bible and 154 times in the New Testament, is not mentioned even once in the Qu'ran. Muhammad never visited Jerusalem, and the Aqsa mosque to which, according to tradition, he made his flight could not have been the one by that name in Jerusalem, built 60 years after his death. True, at the beginning of his career, when he hoped to convert the Jews of Medina, he had his followers bow toward Jerusalem. But as soon as he realized that the Jews would not convert, he replaced Jerusalem with Mecca.

This is not to deny that Jerusalem has a meaning for Muslims. In the recently published *Whose Jerusalem?* by Eliyahu Tal—an encyclopedic compilation of facts about the city—the historian Zwi Werblowsky is quoted on the subject:

> Islam provides us with perhaps the most impressive example of how a holy city can acquire a specific holiness on the basis of what, to the unbelieving outsider at least, is mere legend, superimposed no doubt on an earlier traditional sanctity of the place. Whereas in the case of Christianity the life and death of

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Jesus created religious facts (e.g., the resurrection and ascension) and both combined to create "holy places," the Islamic case is the exact opposite. Beliefs and piety created religious facts, and these in turn produced historic facts which, for the contemporary student of religion, culture, and even politics, must be deemed as real as any other kind of "hard" fact.

CAN Israel, then, resist the onslaught of the Islamic world—the *jihad* on Jerusalem which Arafat has called for—against its exclusive rule in Jerusalem?

If there is anything which can prevent the splitting of Jerusalem, it is the "facts on the ground" that Israel itself has established. Thus, almost immediately after the Six-Day War, the city limits were extended. Jewish neighborhoods began to be set up in five areas across the old Green Line dividing the city, the Jewish Quarter in the Old City was rebuilt, and the area in front of the Western Wall was cleared and made into a spacious plaza.

The Jewish population in the city doubled, from fewer than 200,000 in 1967 to 420,000 today. Of these, 150,000 live in an area formerly ruled by Jordan, slightly outnumbering the Arab population even in what is commonly known as Arab Jerusalem. (The Arab population has also more than doubled—from 65,000 to 150,000; under Jordanian occupation, it had declined.) Jews have settled even in such purely Arab neighborhoods as the "Muslim quarter" (actually a former Jewish neighborhood from which Jews had been expelled). A division of the city now seems impossible, unless more than 150,000 Jews were to be forcibly transferred from its eastern part.

Nor is it possible to "share" the city without dividing it. As Teddy Kollek, known for his willingness to compromise on virtually any issue, has pointed out—and as everyone with minimal common sense must realize—no city can function with two governments, two sets of laws, two police forces, and two customs systems. If Jerusalem serves as the Palestinian capital, it will be divided.

For now, an overwhelming majority of the Israeli Jewish population believes that such a division would spell disaster. More than any other single event, the establishment of a Palestinian capital in Jerusalem would convince the Arabs that the state of Palestine will inherit the state of Israel. No other Palestinian achievement could encourage irredentism and revanchism with greater force. And the Arabs who are currently citizens of Israel would find it impossible not to shift their allegiance to such a Palestinian state.

This would also spell the end of Jordan as an independent state—the prestige and standing of a Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital would make a PLO or Hamas takeover in Amman inevitable. To be sure, the accord signed by Rabin and King Hussein in Washington this past July has revived talk of the opposite scenario—the so-called "Jordanian option"—as if Israel were suddenly now free to ignore its agreement with the PLO and to solve its Palestinian problem with the civilized Hashemite rather than the arch-terrorist Arafat. But this, as Hussein himself has suggested, is nothing but wishful thinking.

The Rabin government is acutely aware of the almost total popular opposition to relinquishing any part of Jerusalem. That is why, in the accord with King Hussein, it promised to give "high priority" to Jordan's historic role in the Muslim holy shrines. The government knows that few Israelis would object if its only concession were to allow Jordanian control over the religious enclave of the Temple Mount.

Indeed, the Muslim and Christian holy places already have a large measure of autonomy. Israeli police—unless they are in hot pursuit of terrorists—do not enter holy sites without first informing the religious figures in charge. Because of objections by the Wakf (the Muslim authority on the Temple Mount), no metal detectors can be installed at the entrances to the Mount. The Wakf determines when tourists can visit, and to all intents and purposes it has barred Israelis from the hallowed grounds. Until this year, Orthodox Jews who are members of the Temple Mount Faithful were allowed to stand for a half-hour of meditation in an open field at one corner of the Mount once a year, on Tisha B'Av. This year, even that was forbidden. Yet the Temple Mount, it should be noted, not the Western Wall, is Judaism's holiest site.

WILL the Rabin government be faithful to its word on Jerusalem? The circumstances which led to the effective relinquishment of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza are virtually identical to those which now obtain in Jerusalem: the presence of a large and hostile Arab minority, the pressure of world opinion for an Israeli retreat, and the enticing prize of "peace" at the end of the road. The signs of hesitation are there: while the government still talks of building plans, most are frozen. It has promised to give Jerusalem Arabs, all of whom can be Israeli citizens for the asking, the right to vote in the autonomy elections. Its think-tank proxies are meeting with Arab counterparts, drawing maps, planning the split.

If the forfeiture of 22 neighborhoods in East Jerusalem ultimately appears as the only obstacle to comprehensive peace and idyllic prosperity, chances are that the withdrawal momentum will prevail, Jerusalem will be divided again, and the sovereign in the relinquished side will not be King Hussein but a dictatorship run by Hamas or the PLO.

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The Case for Global Activism

Robert Kagan

FUTURE historians will record—perhaps in astonishment—that the demise of the Soviet Union ushered in an era of American worldwide engagement and armed intervention unprecedented in scope and frequency. Despite a widespread conviction that, in a post-cold-war world, the American role would diminish, in a brief four years the United States has: launched a massive counteroffensive against the world's fourth largest army in the Middle East; invaded, occupied, and supervised elections in a Latin American country; intervened with force to provide food to starving peoples in Africa; and conducted punitive bombing raids in the Balkans.

Nor is this all. The United States has sent troops on another humanitarian mission in Africa, and volunteered troops to serve as peacekeeping forces in the Middle East and in the former Yugoslavia. It has worked in the UN Security Council to enact punitive sanctions against at least a half-dozen international scofflaws. It has seriously considered extending military protection to several important nations of Eastern Europe that have never before been part of an alliance with the United States. And it has interceded in disputes among the former republics of the Soviet Union.

How is this increased activity to be explained? The answer is rather easily found in the new relations of power in the post-cold-war world. The fall of the Soviet Union removed restraints on foreign leaders unhappy with the order imposed by the cold war and unleashed new struggles for power in areas hitherto under the former superpower's thumb. Some would-be challengers of the old order were encouraged by the belief that the United States would not step in. The United States, however, itself freed from the restraints of the cold war, began to fill the gap left by the absence of Soviet global power and continued a historical tradition of using its influence to promote a world order consistent with its material needs and philosophical predilections.

But if the course America has followed has been natural enough, to many American strategists, policy-makers, and politicians it seems also to have been unexpected—and unwelcome. Today, a scant two years after the intervention in Somalia, three years after the Gulf war, and four years since the invasion of Panama, foreign-policy theorists continue to write of the need for a "global retrenchment" of American power. Before and after each venture abroad, they have argued that such high levels of American engagement cannot be sustained, politically or economically, and that a failure to be more selective in the application of American power will either bankrupt the country or drive the American public further toward the isolationism into which, they warn, it is already beginning to slip.

This political judgment has found intellectual buttressing in the so-called "realist" approach to foreign policy, which asserts that the United States should limit itself to defending its "core" national interests and abandon costly and unpopular efforts to solve the many problems on the "periphery."* During the cold war, realists fought against efforts by Presidents from Truman to Kennedy to Reagan to equate American interests with the advancement of a democratic world order. In the post-cold-war era, they have gained new prominence by again recommending a retreat from such ambitions and the definition of a far more limited set of foreign-policy goals.

Yet the realist view remains inadequate, both as a description, precisely, of reality—of the way the world really works—and as a recommendation for defending America's interests, either on the "periphery" or at the "core." When Americans have exercised their power in pursuit of a broad definition of interests—in pursuit, that is, of a more decent world order—they have succeeded in defending their "vital" interests as well. When they have sought to evade the dangers of global involvement, they have found themselves unexpectedly in a fight for national survival.

THROUGHOUT this century, the United States has faced the problem of its expanding power—and has responded with ambivalence. Americans are perhaps more sus-

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* See, for example, "The Core vs. the Periphery," by Fareed Zakaria, in the December 1993 COMMENTARY.

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picious of power than most people on earth, but just like others they have nonetheless sought it, guarded it, and enjoyed its benefits. As products of a modern, nonmartial republic, Americans have always tended to cherish the lives of their young more than the glories to be won on the battlefield; yet they have sacrificed their young for the sake of honor, interest, and principle as frequently as any nation in the world over the past 200 years. Again, as the products of a revolution against an imperial master, Americans have always abhorred imperialism; yet where their power was preponderant, they have assumed hegemony and have been unwilling to relinquish it.

The common view of American foreign policy as endlessly vacillating between isolationism and interventionism is wrong: Americans in this century have never ceased expanding their sphere of interests across the globe, but they have tried to evade the responsibility of defending those interests, until they had no choice but to fight a war for which they were unprepared. The American conception of interest, moreover, has always gone beyond narrow security concerns to include the promotion of a world order consistent with American economic, political, and ideological aspirations.

It was Theodore Roosevelt, paradoxically a President admired by realists for his shrewd understanding of power politics, who first grafted principled ends to the exercise of power. Roosevelt insisted that it was America's duty to "assume an attitude of protection and regulation in regard to all these little states" in the Western hemisphere, to help them acquire the "capacity for self-government," to assist their progress "up out of the discord and turmoil of continual revolution into a general public sense of justice and determination to maintain order."

For Roosevelt, American stewardship in the Western hemisphere was more than a defensive response to European meddling there; it was proof that the United States had arrived as a world power, with responsibilities to shape a decent order in its own region. When Woodrow Wilson, the quintessential "utopian" President, took office later, his policies in the hemisphere were little more than a variation on Roosevelt's theme.

The same mix of motives followed the United States as it reached out into the wider world, especially Europe and Asia. Growing power expanded American interests, but also expanded the risks of protecting them against the ambitions of others. After the 1880's, America's navy grew from a size comparable to Chile's to become one of the three great navies of the world. That increase in power alone made America a potential arbiter of overseas conflicts in a way it had never been in the 18th and 19th centuries. Greater power meant that if a general European war broke out, the United States would no longer have to sit back and accept dictation of its trade routes. It also meant, however, that the United States could not sit back without accepting a diminished role in world affairs.

Nor could Americans escape choosing sides. Although German- and Irish-Americans disagreed, most Americans in the 1910's preferred the British-run world order with which they were familiar to a prospective German one. Wilson's pro-British neutrality made conflict with Germany almost inevitable, and America's new great-power status made it equally inevitable that when the German challenge came, the United States would not back down.

It was the growth of American power, not Wilsonian idealism and not national interest narrowly conceived, that led the United States into its first European war. A weak 19th-century America could not have conceived of intervening in Europe; a strong 20th-century America, because it could intervene, found that it had an interest in doing so.

After World War I, Americans recoiled from the new responsibilities and dangers which their power had brought. But they did not really abandon their new, broader conception of the national interest. Throughout the "isolationist" years, the United States still sought, however half-heartedly and ineffectually, to preserve its expanded influence and the world order it had fought for.

Although they refused to assume military obligations, Presidents from Harding to Franklin Roosevelt tried to maintain balance and order in Europe and in Asia through economic and political agreements. In Central America and the Caribbean, the Republican Presidents found themselves endlessly intervening, occupying, and supervising elections only so that they might eventually withdraw. (Only FDR decided that the best way to be a "good neighbor" in the hemisphere was to allow dictatorship to flourish.)

AMERICANS, then, did not shun international involvement in the interwar years. Rather, they tried to enjoy the benefits of such involvement while hoping to avoid its inevitable costs. They resisted Japanese attempts to swallow China, but they did not believe the national interest required them to fight in Asia. They were unwilling to see France and England defeated by an increasingly dangerous Germany, but they did not see an interest in risking American lives in Europe. Through arms control and the theoretical banning of war, the United States sought ever more utopian mechanisms for pursuing its interests without risk. In the end, of course, this refusal to acknowledge the need to defend its expanded interests helped make war inevitable. Americans allowed the world order to col-

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lapse only to realize that this was a result they could not afford.

But if World War II marked the destruction of the old world order, it also extended the reach of American power beyond Theodore Roosevelt's capacity to imagine. And it offered American leaders another chance to confront the new responsibilities which the expansion of power had created.

We often forget that the plan for world order devised by American leaders in the last years of the war was not intended to contain the Soviet Union. Their purpose was to build a more stable international system than that which had exploded in 1939. They hoped that the new system, embodied in the United Nations, would eventually become a self-regulating mechanism, protecting American interests without requiring the constant exercise of American power. But they also understood that American power had become the keystone in the arch of any world order.

The threat to the new system which soon emerged in the form of the Soviet Union quickly changed Americans' sense of what the U.S. was trying to accomplish. The original goal of promoting and defending a decent world order became conflated with the goal of meeting the challenge of Soviet power—and in the minds of many people it remains so to this day.

Thus, all the policies that the United States would have continued to pursue without the existence of a Soviet Union—seeking a stable international economic system, exercising dominant influence in the Western hemisphere, insisting on an ever-increasing role in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, demanding adherence to international agreements, preferring dictatorship to disorder but also preferring democracy to dictatorship—became associated with the strategy of containment. This had the effect, unfortunate in retrospect, of obscuring the essential continuities in American foreign policy since the beginning of the century.

The fact is that America was simultaneously pursuing two goals during the cold war—promotion of a world order and defense against the biggest threat to it. Characteristically, each of them was beset by ambivalence. There is a common presumption today that the choices of that era were somehow easier, that there was a broad consensus about at least a few basic certainties. Nostalgia for these alleged "certainties" obscures from memory the long, bitter debates over the proper definition of American interests during the cold war. But it is worth remembering that even the now-hallowed doctrine of containment was denounced as dangerous and impossibly ambitious by clear-headed "realists" of the time. (Walter Lippmann, for example, called containment a "strategic monstrosity" because it seemed to require an American response to every conceivable Soviet thrust anywhere in the world.)

There were, as it happens, few certainties in the cold war. The gray areas in which the hardest decisions had to be made were much like the gray areas of today. The two major American wars of that era were fought in regions and involved conflicts—Korea and Vietnam—where the direct interests of the United States were at least debatable. Throughout the cold war, indeed, fighting took place almost entirely on the "periphery," and was often conducted in the name of universal ideals that transcended the strategic importance of the plot of ground being contested.

THE end of the cold war has required the United States once again to face the old dilemmas. As in the aftermath of World War II, the areas of the world where America exerts influence have expanded, not contracted. So, too, have the burdens of promoting and sustaining a world order that serves American material and spiritual needs.

The demise of the Soviet Union has not eliminated the threat to that order; it has only changed its form. Instead of arising from a single, large adversary, the threat has devolved into a large number of smaller but collectively serious challenges. As in the past, many experts have come forward to argue that resources are lacking for a globally active policy designed to meet those challenges, that the American public would be unwilling to support it, and even that American power is declining.

The evidence does not support these claims.

The percentage of the American economy devoted to military spending has dropped to the small digits. This is too low to allow the United States to carry out the many new tasks it will face in the post-cold-war era, but the increases that will be necessary will hardly bankrupt the country.

Nor is the assumption warranted that the American public does not support the overseas commitments and interventions undertaken in these past four years, or opposes further commitments today. Americans have rarely been enthusiastic about extensive overseas involvements, but the public has clearly been more willing to support them in the 1990's than it was in the 70's and 80's, as is demonstrated by the popularity of successful actions in such places as the Persian Gulf and Panama. Even in Bosnia and Somalia, ordinary Americans have complained not about action, but about confused and half-hearted policies and weak and incompetent execution.

We have also learned that the use of force need not be tied to unmistakable and narrowly defined security interests in order to win public support. A Latin American dictator cancels elections and helps Colombian drug dealers sell cocaine; a

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Middle Eastern despot invades a tiny neighboring country in order to control its oil wells; an African country dissolves into civil war and chaos, and famine threatens millions with starvation; one ethnic group tries to drive another ethnic group off its land and commits atrocities; an unfriendly Asian power develops nuclear weapons in violation of international agreements. Among these various events, only the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait qualified as a direct threat to American economic interests. In general, the issues that have invited an American response—aggression, political illegitimacy, genocide, mass starvation, nuclear proliferation, violations of international agreements—are all matters that fall under the general heading of threats to the kind of world order Americans value.

Can we sustain a policy of active response? Henry Kissinger has recently argued that, contrary to appearances, American power is actually in decline relative to other nations. While he admits that it "will remain unrivaled for the foreseeable future," nevertheless, because all power in the world has become more "diffuse," America's ability "to shape the rest of the world has actually decreased."

But surely the same level of American power applied to a world where opposing power is more diffuse should be more, not less, effective. America's problem today is not that its power is in relative decline but, on the contrary, that the places where it can exert potentially decisive influence have increased in number, and so have the choices we must confront.

Do "losses" on the periphery matter? Indeed, can there even be American "losses" on the periphery if America does not choose to become involved? Should America resist all those who oppose its view of world order? Or should the United States keep its powder dry for the really serious threats to its existence—the dominance of Europe or Asia, for instance, by a single power? Such is the nature of the questions Americans have faced throughout this century, and have answered in two different and historically instructive ways.

It would seem to make sense to heed the realists' assertion that a nation may become distracted, or exhaust itself by lesser endeavors, and thus fail to guard that which is most important. But this in fact is the path the United States followed in the 1930's, and lived to regret. First it failed to respond to the peripheral Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the peripheral Spanish Civil War, and the peripheral Japanese conquest of Manchuria, and then it failed to respond as well when the big threat to "core" interests did finally emerge in the figure of Hitler's Germany. The big threats and vital interests, as it turned out, were no less debatable than the small threats and lesser interests.

American policy during the cold war provides an interesting contrast. Despite a terrible debacle on the periphery, the United States did not lose sight of the core. On the contrary, concern about the core and concern about the periphery seem to have been mutually reinforcing. The "lesson of Munich," which dominated cold-war thinking until its temporary replacement by the "lesson of Vietnam," taught that a failure of will on small matters eventually led to a failure of will on more vital matters as well. This proved to be a sound strategy for defending American interests, both large and small, and it was this strategy that made possible a peaceful victory in the cold war.

There is no certainty that we can correctly distinguish between high-stakes issues and small-stakes issues in time to sound the alarm. In the past we did not know for sure whether an invasion of Ethiopia was merely the whim of an Italian despot in an irrelevant part of Africa or the harbinger of fascist aggression in Europe, whether a North Vietnamese victory was a signal of national reunification or the prelude to a hostile takeover of Southeast Asia. So today we do not know whether Serbian aggression is "ethnic turmoil" or the first step in the breakdown of European order.

But the way one handles the small threats is likely to determine the way one handles the larger threats. It does not take much imagination to envision what those larger threats may be: the rise of militant anti-American Muslim fundamentalism in North Africa and the Middle East, a rearmed Germany in a chaotic Europe, a revitalized Russia, a rearmed Japan in a scramble for power with China in a volatile East Asia. If the goal is a United States capable of meeting these more serious threats when they do arise, then the best policy is one that seeks involvement rather than shuns it. Once appeasing adversaries and wishing away problems becomes a habit, it becomes a hard habit to break.

While America's realists claim to await confrontation with the next Nazi Germany or Soviet empire, the tests of American strength, character, and endurance, essential to the preservation of a more stable world order, will continue to come in such unlikely places as Bosnia, Haiti, Somalia, and Korea. If we cannot plug every breach in the world order, we also cannot allow potential challengers of that order to act in the confidence that the United States will stand aside.

The post-cold-war era is a time of readjustment. Relationships of power change constantly, but how Americans respond to crises, even small ones, in this time of transition will affect the nature of the changes yet to come. Only if it is ready to engage its power when and as needed can the United States hope to shape the character and direction of the forces of change rather than be overwhelmed by them.

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FINALLY, a political question that needs to be asked: who among us, Democrat or Republican, is prepared to rise to the challenge and follow the demanding (if in the long run safer) course of global activism?

On the Democratic side, even those Clinton-administration officials who appear willing to assert American leadership find it hard to overcome the instinctive aversion to the use of power which still burdens them twenty years after Vietnam. They seek the fruits of American intervention, yet seem incapable of doing what is necessary to secure them. Democrats today are paying the price for their years of opposition to Republican assertions of American strength abroad.

Since the Vietnam war, indeed, only the Republican party has had the understanding and the confidence to use American power in defense of the nation's interests. Yet the Republican party itself is now teetering on the edge of a historic transformation. Increasing numbers of Republican politicians, policy-makers, and intellectuals agree with Minority Whip Newt Gingrich's judgment that the United States is now "overextended around the world." There are fewer Republican calls for increases in the defense budget, and more Republican calls for decreases in overseas commitments. The Republican party is less and less recognizable as the party of Ronald Reagan or the George Bush who sent troops to Panama and the Persian Gulf.

In the same way, 75 years ago the Republicans transformed themselves from the party of the internationalist Theodore Roosevelt into the party of the isolationist Senator William Borah. In defeating Woodrow Wilson's brand of utopian internationalism, Republicans also killed the more practical internationalism of men like Henry Cabot Lodge, who believed American power had a critical role to play in preventing another war in Europe. When that disaster finally loomed, it was not Lodge but Borah who spoke for the party.

Victory in the cold war came when Republicans vehemently rejected the idea that the United States had to accept a diminished capacity to shape the world and adjust to the increasing power of its strategic and ideological adversaries. Such a prescription is as disastrous today as it was then, and shows the same lack of faith in the American people and their acceptance of responsibility. It took confidence and determination to take the United States safely through the end of the cold war. It will take no less confidence and determination to move America through this next, dangerous phase of history.

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The ADL vs. the "Religious Right"

Midge Decter

In June of this year, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an established and highly respected organization dedicated to the protection and security of the American Jewish community, published a 193-page study entitled *The Religious Right: The Assault on Tolerance & Pluralism in America.* The study, prepared by David Cantor of the ADL research department, is intended to warn the country of the growth, in the words of Cantor's introduction, of an "exclusionist religious movement" seeking to "unite its version of Christianity with state power."

Essentially this movement as the ADL defines it is made up of fundamentalist and evangelical Protestants (though a number of its leaders happen in fact to be Catholics) and its program, according to the ADL, consists of various

> grass-roots campaigns to "return faith to our public schools," subsidize private religious education, roll back civil-rights protections, oppose all abortions, and ensure that "pro-family Christians" gain control of the Republican party.

Though the movement came to public attention in the 1980's, says the ADL, in the 1990's its leaders have grown ever more virulent and paranoiac in their rhetoric, referring to their opponents, for example, as "the enemy" and "satanic." And finally,

> this bitter push to replace the wall of separation [between church and state] with a citadel of Christianity . . . has been abetted, sometimes at the highest levels, by figures who have expressed conspiratorial, anti-Jewish, and extremist sentiments.

In short, rather than compete for the spiritual allegiance of their fellow Americans, as true pluralists have always done, the members of the religious Right wish instead to impose their own beliefs on everyone—and hence, the ADL claims, the movement ironically sets about to attack the very spirit of toleration that has for so long been the source of its own protection and strength.

So far as the ADL is concerned, at least as bad as the ideas of the religious Right are its methods. Somewhere around 1990, the study notes, the decision was taken by the movement's leaders to engage in serious organizing and political activity at the grass roots, and by 1994 this decision has menacingly borne fruit:

> The national offices of the movement's major organizations provide resources, strategy, and political training, often by means of weekend civic-activism courses in local churches. . . . These sessions, though often premised on distorted and sectarian notions of the Constitution and American history, have equipped activists with an estimable nuts-and-bolts political know-how and dedication.

What, in the view of the ADL, lends even more weight to the threat posed by all this grass-roots activity is the close coordination among groups with ostensibly varying agendas, whether it be barring gays and lesbians from the military or opposing abortion or campaigning for school vouchers. The leaders of these groups keep in regular contact with one another, speak at one another's conferences, appear on one another's broadcasts, and contribute to one another's publications. In this way they manage to a significant degree to increase their collective strength and resources.

Following this general description of the threat posed by the Christian Right are a dozen profiles of figures and organizations clearly intended to serve as more detailed documentation for the ADL's allegations. Some of these profiles are full-length, some no more than a paragraph or a single page; some of those discussed are people and groups it is legitimate to regard as important to the conservative Christian community, while others are to be found only at its outermost margin.

It is in these profiles that the methods and intentions of the ADL study are most clearly revealed. And, at least for anyone who has learned to value much of the work done by the ADL over the years, these methods and intentions are apt to be as disquieting as they are almost unrelievedly nasty.

For one thing, some of the profiles are profusely supplied with quotations, and yet rarely are we given any but the vaguest details about where they are taken from. Just about the only precise citations are from sources not exactly sympathetic to conservative Christian thought and purposes, such as the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Newsweek*. In the case of what might be considered primary sources—for instance, the newsletter put out by the Christian Broadcasting Network called *Pat Robertson's Perspective*, a publication freely quoted in the lengthy profile of Robertson—we are asked to take the ADL's word not only for the accuracy of the many secondhand quotations themselves but for the irrelevance of the particular contexts in which they were spoken.

Aside from the generally cavalier attitude toward the use of sources, the study's acknowledgments page leaves the reader in

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little doubt about the general underlying tendency of its research. Among those thanked for their generous assistance in completing this study are the Institute for First Amendment Studies, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, People for the American Way, the Coalition for Human Dignity, Mainstream Voters Project, and Women's Project—in other words, groups which are often in the business of rousing public hostility against conservative Christian sensibilities and values.

The way Pat Robertson is treated here is a good example of how the study works. Though the ADL itself informs us that Robertson is among the staunchest supporters of Israel, including even Israel's claim to Jerusalem, and that he has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to help Russian-Jewish émigrés, it asks us to believe that he views the Jews "as akin to spiritual pawns." The evidence for this is that at a Christian broadcasting Network prayer meeting in 1980, he declared (according to a report in *Reform Judaism*) that "Jews were 'spiritually deaf' and 'spiritually blind' but that in the climactic end times many would be converted."

Even assuming that these quotes are accurate, they are left hanging without any indication of the specific context in which they were spoken or the larger theological context from which Robertson's attitude toward Jews derives (a context, incidentally, that helps explain why he is so vehemently pro-Israel).

In other instances, the report simply misreads things Robertson has said. Thus, on more than one occasion, in complaining that Christian believers feel more and more oppressed in an increasingly secularized society, he has likened their lot in America to that of the Jews under the Nazis. This is morally offensive and intellectually ludicrous, and it is especially grating to Jewish ears (though a great many Jews have for decades now been easygoing about comparably hyperbolic rhetoric coming from blacks). Yet it hardly qualifies as "anti-Jewish sentiment."

Nor, to anyone not being determinedly tendentious, is the following quote from Robertson "reminiscent of traditional anti-Semitic thinking":

> Perhaps we can assume that the current wave of anti-Semitism is being allowed by God to force the large number of the chosen people residing in the Soviet Union out of what the Bible calls the land of the north.

ANOTHER unpleasant feature of *The Religious Right* is the breathy, triumphal tone in which it offers some supposedly shocking revelations of ideas and activities of the Right about which no secret has ever been made. Christian conservatives, for example, have never concealed their view that when the Constitution says there shall be no established church, it does not intend that there shall be no expression of religion in public life. And as the ADL should know, Christian conservatives are by no means alone in this view. Indeed, the question of whether there may or may not be any religious expression in schools and other government-supported institutions is now at the center of a growing and ever noisier public debate, as is the somewhat related issue of parental choice in education. To suggest that those who side with Christian conservatives on these issues are being manipulated, or are part of a malignant conspiracy themselves, is both ridiculous and defamatory.

It is true that the term "stealth candidates" has been used by a conservative Christian activist in referring to the fact that he and his associates had supported certain candidates from behind the scenes (a practice, it might be observed, not always abjured either by Jewish activists or left-wing ones). But it has certainly never been concealed from the world that this movement seeks to organize and offer assistance to local pressure groups wherever it can.

In any event, why is this turn to the grass roots depicted by the ADL as something sinister? Is it not what some of the very organizations thanked for their assistance in the preparation of *The Religious Right* have been doing for many years now, without rousing the anxieties of the would-be defenders of pluralism?

EVEN more disturbing than any of this, however, is the study's use of that once thoroughly discredited trick, guilt by association.

Here, too, Pat Robertson is a target. Thus, we are told that at the age of twenty-six, he was introduced by his mother to a Philadelphia minister named Cornelius Vanderbreggen. "A short time later," according to the study, Robertson experienced a "charismatic spiritual rebirth." We are not told how much and what kind of influence Vanderbreggen had on Robertson. Vanderbreggen is brought in entirely for the sake of a footnote which informs us that he was someone who had "a long history of anti-Israel propagandizing and also wrote for the *Spotlight*, weekly tabloid of Liberty Lobby, the nation's leading anti-Semitic propagandists." Yet as we have seen, the study itself acknowledges elsewhere that Robertson is pro-Israel. The only purpose served by this footnote is to insinuate that he is linked with anti-Israel and anti-Semitic forces.

But perhaps the most sustained example of guilt by association is the study's treatment of Paul Weyrich. The founder and president of the Free Congress Foundation, a training facility for conservative activists, Weyrich also heads a think tank as well as a lobbying group called Coalitions for America; in addition, he recently set up a cable television network called National Empowerment Television (NET). All his work is guided by the belief that, in his own words, there is "an unbreakable link between traditional Western, Judeo-Christian values and the secular success of Western societies" (hardly, need one add, an extremist view).

In attempting to cast a shadow on all this daylight activity, the ADL sets about to provide it with a dark and guilty underside. In 1981, the study charges, Free Congress published a pamphlet written by one Warren Richardson, who many years before had served as general counsel to the Liberty Lobby.

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Never mind that Weyrich has said, "I dislike the Liberty Lobby and have thrown them out of my office." The connection between Weyrich and the Liberty Lobby is nevertheless made.

It is made again in the case of Father Enrique Rueda, who, the ADL informs us, was asked by Weyrich to "research the social and political impact of the homosexual movement in America." The book that resulted, *The Homosexual Network: Private Lives and Public Policy*, described in a Free Congress Foundation release as an exposé of the homosexual movement in America, was then put out in 1982 by Devin Adair, a small publishing house in Connecticut. Devin Adair, notes the ADL, was also one of the leading publishers of Holocaust-denial material and advertised its books in the *Spotlight*.*

Finally: in 1983, the Free Congress PAC contributed to the congressional campaign of Joseph Morecraft in Georgia. About this campaign or its opponent, the ADL tells us nothing. Instead, it simply quotes the liberal *Christian Century* as saying of Morecraft that he "has been trying to convince Georgia's Republican party to declare the Bible the source of all civil law." But the Free Congress PAC also contributed to the campaign of Jon Hinson of Mississippi, a homosexual. Would the ADL cite this as evidence of Weyrich's support for gay rights?

NO DOUBT people hostile to the Jews exist here and there among conservative Christians. But so do people hostile to the Jews exist among liberal Christians and among the fiercest of secularists as well. The question, then, is why an organization long regarded as expert in the study of anti-Semitism should have singled out the conservative Christians for opprobrium—especially when, as a group, they have been perhaps the most outspoken friends of Israel in this country.

Judging from the book itself, the answer has to do not with Christians and Jews but with secular politics. The religious Right is a force dedicated to implementing a series of ideas and measures that are anathema to most liberals. In attacking this agenda, and the people who support it, as a threat to pluralism, the ADL has chosen to join hands with all those on the liberal Left who are determined to delegitimize any challenge to the power they have long enjoyed over the basic institutions of American life and culture.

Thus has an organization which is devoted to fighting bigotry against Jews, and which now claims to be undertaking a defense of pluralism, defined the sensibilities and convictions of some 50 million Americans as beyond the pale. And thus has it become guilty of the one bigotry that seems to be acceptable these days—bigotry against conservative Christians.

* Perhaps the ADL imagines that Father Rueda preferred not to have his book put out by, say, Random House and gave it to Devin Adair merely out of a desire to be published by a small and obscure house.

Observations

Lessons from the Soviet Collapse

Charles H. Fairbanks

LAST year, a special issue of the *National Interest* attempted the beginnings of an autopsy on the Soviet system. Now, with the appearance of Martin Malia's *The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917-1991** and Richard Pipes's *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime*†, the great reappraisal—not only of the Soviet system itself, but of the implications of its rise, consolidation, and eventual collapse for the political culture of the West—is fully under way.

For all their similarities, the books by Pipes and Malia are very different. Pipes, in a sequel to his *The Russian Revolution* (1990), presents us with a rather detailed narrative history of 1918-23, based on elaborate research. In some parts, such as the account of the Civil War or of Lenin's relations with Stalin, his narrative has the drama of a novel or of military history.

Malia, on the other hand, has written a conceptual history of the

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entire Soviet regime which largely draws on the research of others, except for the period of perestroika and collapse. It is a very French book, inspired by the Parisian intellectual milieu, dominated throughout by a fascination with ideas that results in cascades of glittering aphorisms, always deeply thought-provoking but rarely proved.

The deepest disagreement of Pipes and Malia is about the pattern or "logic" of Communism's life course. Malia boldly defies the currently fashionable social history: "The concrete agenda of this book . . . is to reassert the primacy of ideology and politics over social and economic forces in understanding the Soviet phenomenon." For Malia, in "really existing" Marxism, as opposed to the theoretical kind, it was ideology that was the base, the economy that was the superstructure.

As against Malia, Pipes argues that Bolshevism represented a filling of the ambiguous Marxist legacy "with the content nearest to hand, which in Russia was the historic legacy of [autocratic] patrimonialism." Pipes makes his case in this elegant formula:

> It is not that the Bolsheviks wanted to copy czarist practices: on the contrary, they wanted to have nothing in common with them, to do the very opposite. They emulated them by force of circumstance. Once they rejected democracy, . . . they had no choice but to govern autocratically. And to rule autocratically meant ruling the people in a manner to which they had been accustomed.

Thus the Soviet Union under the Communists wound up with institutions oddly reminiscent of early-modern Russia: an autocrat, a "service nobility" of officials rendering obligatory state service, peasantry bound to the land.

WHAT, then, according to each of these authors, is the deepest lesson to be learned by the West from the catastrophic failure of Communism or "socialism"? To begin with Malia, we confront an immediate paradox: although his brilliant book is more theoretical than Pipes's, and more informed by philosophy, its conclusion is oddly anticlimactic:

> So long as inequality exists, society will continue to be divided into a Left and a Right, a "party of movement" and a "party of resistance". . . And the former camp will continue to be called "socialism," for the discredit cast upon that magical word in the immediate wake of the Soviet disaster will not last beyond the next crisis of "capitalism"—that is, of the real world. So in one form or another, the lion of "capitalism" and the unicorn of "socialism" will no doubt contend inconclusively until the end of modernity.

In believing that the "party of movement" will continue to be called "socialism," Malia may be too rooted in the present moment. After all, the organization of politics along religious lines after the Reformation did not survive the disastrous wars of religion that followed. Nor did the political "party" of monarchy and aristocracy long outlast the democratic revolutions and the rise of popular sovereignty in the 18th and 19th centuries. Fascism, under that name, was enormously popular in many countries during the 1930's but could not survive the war and the revelation of what the fascist regimes had really done. In this sense, the end of modernity may be nearer than Malia thinks.

ONE reason why it is possible to imagine an end to modernity—which is also the age of ideology—is that we know premodernity. In classical antiquity, armies of rebellious slaves, like the one organized by Spartacus, could ravage Italy and make Rome tremble, but there was no demand for the abolition of slavery because there was no alternative world view—no ideology—around which to organize political upheavals ("revolutions") so as to usher in a rational political order. The place that modernity fills with the vision of a just society of the future was filled earlier by the idea of a golden age or Garden of Eden, from which man had fallen, or by a utopia in the literal sense, which existed "nowhere" because the conditions that would permit it to exist were found nowhere and could not be created by human will.

But if antiquity was closed to ideology, the future could be too. As I wrote in the Spring 1993 *National Interest*:

> . . . When Communism finally perishes, there will be for the first time in about 300 years no strong alternative world view to that undergirding the existing institutions, no vision of alternative political arrangements to sustain an adversary culture, and no strong ideologically driven movement to secure those arrangements. Our life both political and intellectual will proceed within an entirely new horizon.

Perhaps Malia arrives at such a tame conclusion to his savage attack on the Soviet experiment because he believes that the market ("capitalism") cannot, by itself, give us a just society. "The just society, insofar as it can be approached, must be the product of the moral and political will of a community acting on the amoral forces of the market. And this means that state intervention in the market's operation for moral and political ends" is and must always be part of the "natural" order of society.

Thus, the great lesson to be learned from the Communist failure seems to reduce to the absolute need to avoid utopianism. But Malia draws back even from this conclusion, to which his whole narrative powerfully drives us. For Malia,

> . . . [u]topias are as necessary as they are dangerous. Without the goad of exaggerated hope and excessive zeal, very little democratic reform would be launched in this world. . . . The overstatements of visionary socialism were necessary to produce the welfare state, which is the present point of equilibrium between the two forces ["socialism" and "capitalism"] that now define the politics of normality.

Yet even if one takes for granted the goodness of the welfare state, Great Britain, to cite one important example, reached it without

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actual or proposed utopian revolutions. What would seem to follow, on Malia's premises, from a comparison of the Soviet and British cases would be something like a very cautious, unsystematic (and therefore "unideological") meliorism, not the necessity of utopia.

Besides, there is another "goad of exaggerated hope and excessive zeal" apart from political utopia. It is religion. The biblical prophets fearlessly reproached kings, reformed society, and inspired the rebuilding of the Temple without resorting to the utopian illusion. Malia does not advance this possibility, perhaps deterred by his clever insight that in modern times, the utopian illusion became "possible . . . only because history was *in fact* in constantly accelerating movement toward greater equality and scientific progress." In other words, modern science and technology *intrinsically* pose utopian possibilities and give rise to utopian visions. This truth suggests how hard it may be to cope with the lessons of the collapse of Communism.

PIPES, for his part, is determined to cope with them. His conclusions from the Soviet tragedy are grimmer than Malia's, less graceful and elusive, more uncompromising and radical. The first lesson that Pipes draws is this:

> Bolshevism was the most audacious attempt in history to subject the entire life of a country to a master plan, to rationalize everybody and everything. It sought to sweep aside as useless rubbish the wisdom that mankind had accumulated over millennia. In that sense, it was a unique effort to apply science to human affairs. . . . Communism failed because it proceeded from the erroneous doctrine of the Enlightenment, perhaps the most pernicious idea in the history of thought, that man is merely a material compound, devoid of either soul or innate ideas, and as such a passive product of an infinitely malleable social environment.

Pipes is absolutely right that the failure of the Soviet experiment compels another look at the entire Enlightenment project. In premodern times, the fate of Socrates in Athens served as an archetype of the relation between thinking and social life; every community was, in principle, always trying to kill Socrates. Modernity has tried to overcome this contradiction between philosophy and life-in-community by making philosophy ("enlightenment") not only the provider of science and technology but the revealer of a better way of life that the community can seize for everyone.

On the other hand, Pipes does not note how radical this lesson might be. For the Enlightenment is at work not only in Soviet ideology but in the American Founding, too. That great enterprise opened with the declaration that "We hold these *truths* to be self-evident. . . ." Precisely because the Soviet experiment was so much more extreme than ours in attempting to enlighten or rationalize social life, it can alert us to dangers or even defects intrinsic to our own version of the Enlightenment project.

Pipes sums up his second lesson in these words:

> The Russian Revolution has raised the profoundest moral questions about the nature of politics, namely, the right of governments to try to remake human beings and refashion society without their mandate and even against their will. . . . Hippolyte Taine drew from his monumental study of the French Revolution a lesson that he himself described as "puerile," namely, that "human society, especially a modern society, is a vast and complicated thing." One is tempted to supplement this observation with a corollary, that precisely because modern society is so "vast and complicated" and therefore so difficult to grasp, it is neither proper nor feasible to impose on it patterns of conduct, let alone try to remake it. What cannot be comprehended cannot be controlled. The tragic and sordid history of the Russian Revolution . . . teaches that political authority must never be employed for ideological ends. It is best to let people be.

This courageous conclusion, if we take it seriously, is in radical opposition to the entire tradition of the Left, and almost of modernity as such. It represents the recovery of a certain conservative tradition which insists that revolutions are bad not only when their ideology is bad or utopian but even when their agenda is admirable—the tradition of such thinkers as Hume, Burke, and Taine.

Himself a participant in the "Reagan revolution" (as adviser to the President on Soviet affairs), Pipes does not discuss how deep this anti-revolutionary understanding might cut in a country that still more or less respects its Founding in the American Revolution. Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Madison thought it morally proper and feasible to impose on society patterns of conduct within certain limits set by human nature, the separation of state and society, and the circumstances of their time and place. Lenin did not accept any such limits. The American Founding project, which for some people seems far too "conservative," too accepting of the status quo (especially in the case of slavery), seems in Pipes's formulation almost too radical.

THESE vast philosophical and moral issues gain a certain urgency from the snags now increasingly obstructing the transitions to democracy in the countries of the former Soviet Union. It is too early to draw any conclusions, but many of these transitions may be failing, and it is not clear that the advice tendered by Western observers has been helpful.

One possible mistake may have been in the very notion of a "velvet revolution"—that is, a painless and morally pure shift to a normal order that was somehow already available and that could be purchased "off the shelf," as it were. The older concept of the "founder" or "legislator"—i.e., a person who creates a structure that ordinary statesmen will work within—has the advantage that it alerts one to the enormous *difficulty* of the task, and to the need for both imagination and human sympathy. But this is a role that both tempts *hubris* and points to the moral dangers involved.

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Malia and Pipes have ensured, once their work is absorbed, that the name of Lenin will shine through history as a symbol of these moral dangers. History, in presenting us once again today with chaos in Russia, once again challenges the people of the former USSR with the need to decide whether they are facing an opportunity or only a seductive temptation. If there are opportunities, they can be seized only by finishing the debate Pipes and Malia have opened.

Clement Greenberg: An Appreciation

Roger Kimball

THE art critic Clement Greenberg died this past May at the age of eighty-five. Although he had written little for more than two decades, Greenberg remained a contentious and widely discussed, almost a legendary, figure in the art world and the world of academic art criticism.

Even in death Greenberg managed to stir controversy. The obituary of him in the *New York Times*, for example, was a model of ignorance and stupidity. Not only did the author garble the name of the artist Theodoros Stamos, and not only did he confuse *Partisan Review*—the distinguished highbrow magazine for which Greenberg wrote some of his most important essays—with the *Paris Review* (a feat more or less equivalent to confusing COMMENTARY with *Commonweal*); but he also produced a grotesque caricature of Greenberg's ideas, according to which Greenberg was supposed to have thought that art criticism should equal art as a creative endeavor.

If the *Times* obituary was probably the dumbest to appear in a major newspaper, for pure malevolence the sneering attack on Greenberg written by Paul Richard in the *Washington Post* must take the palm. According to Richard, Greenberg was a bit of a hypocrite, spouting Marxist rhetoric while disdaining the taste of the masses. Moreover, Richard hinted darkly, Greenberg compromised his critical independence by accepting works of art as presents from artists he admired and wrote about. Even worse, Greenberg was "the narrowest of judges," someone who shamelessly touted his few favorite artists but "caused much pain" to those many he did not like.

What one could not glean from either obituary (or "Appreciation," as the *Post* called Richard's exercise in character assassination) is the fact that many consider Clement Greenberg to be the most important art critic America has yet produced. To be sure, there have always been plenty of voices raised against him and his ideas. In the 1940's and 1950's, artists who failed to attract his praise and critics who succeeded in attracting his ire naturally rebelled against his strictures. In recent years, the attacks have become more virulent, as a wide range of academic critics and their epigones have taken aim not only at Greenberg's judgments but also at the aesthetic and moral values that informed them.

Nevertheless, Greenberg is probably the only American art critic whose achievement places him within shooting distance of such European masters of the form as John Ruskin, Roger Fry, Charles Baudelaire, and Julius Meier-Graefe. His reputation rests chiefly on two things, the first of which was his early championship of Abstract Expressionism.

In the 1940's, when their work first came to public attention, such artists as Jackson Pollock, David Smith, and Willem de Kooning were generally either ridiculed or ignored. A look at the art coverage from the 1940's, in specialized journals as well as in newspapers and magazines like *Time*, shows a discipline by turns confused, complacent, and moribund. Greenberg, by contrast, instantly discerned that something important was going on in Abstract Expressionism (as it would come to be called), and his criticism sounded a new and vigorous note. He began writing about and praising Pollock as early as 1943. In 1948, on the occasion of de Kooning's first one-man exhibition, Greenberg famously called him "one of the four or five most important painters in the country."

Such judgments helped to establish the careers of many artists and, by the 1950's, when Abstract Expressionism came into its own, to secure Greenberg's own authority as a critic of formidable power and prescience. T.S. Eliot, whose literary criticism Greenberg admired above all others, once wrote that "the rudiment of criticism is the ability to select a good poem and reject a bad poem; and its most severe test is of its ability to select a good *new* poem." By this standard, Greenberg passed the most rigorous test to confront an art critic since the 1910's. In fact, he passed it again and again in his discriminating reviews for the *Na-*

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tion (where he was the regular art critic from 1943 to 1949) and in the essays he wrote from the 1940's through the 1960's for *Partisan Review*, COMMENTARY (where he also worked as an editor in the 1950's), *Horizon*, *Encounter*, and other journals.

In a deeper sense, however, it may well be that Greenberg's lasting importance as a critic will be seen to rest less upon his particular likes and dislikes—and less upon his campaign on behalf of Abstract Expressionism—than upon the uncompromising seriousness with which he pursued his vocation as a critic. This is the second, and perhaps more important, thing that has underwritten Greenberg's reputation as a major critic: his unwavering allegiance to the cause of high art. From the appearance of his first important essay, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," in *Partisan Review* in 1939, Greenberg staunchly upheld the prerogatives of high culture against the debasements of popular culture and, especially, the insidious attenuations of "middlebrow" taste.

UNTIL quite recently, it has been difficult to take Greenberg's measure as a critic because so little of his work was easily available. Many readers under the age of fifty or so knew him chiefly through *Art and Culture*, the modest selection of essays (many of them substantially revised) that Greenberg published in 1961. The appearance of Greenberg's collected essays and criticism, edited and introduced by the art historian John O'Brian, has changed that. The first two volumes, containing work that Greenberg published from 1939 to 1949, appeared in 1987;* the concluding two volumes, with work published through 1969, appeared last year.†

O'Brian is to be congratulated on a fine job of editing. Although the collected criticism is not quite the complete criticism—O'Brian lists a large handful of reviews, "statements," and translations from the German that he left out—the series does present most of Greenberg's work as a critic (excluding his few monographs on individual artists) as well as a useful bibliography of articles on him. There is also a good biographical sketch, as well as an excellent index to each volume that amounts to a summary of important events and figures in the cultural world of the period.

In the first two volumes, O'Brian puts his finger on one of Greenberg's chief virtues as a critic—to wit, that he was "quick to reject what seemed meretricious in contemporary culture." Unfortunately, in his introduction to volumes three and four, which cover the period 1950-69, O'Brian succumbs to a fashionable bit of left-wing ideological dogma according to which Abstract Expressionism was used by the U.S. government as a weapon in cold-war political maneuvering.**

Thus, in considering "The Plight of Our Culture," a two-part essay about the fate of high culture in a democratic society that Greenberg published in COMMENTARY in 1953, O'Brian tells us that Greenberg's earlier "pessimism about the culture of modernity had given way to optimism," and suggests that this alleged change of position can be traced to the U.S. government's effort to coopt intellectuals and extend U.S. cultural influence.

But (in the first place) Greenberg did not suddenly do an about-face and enroll himself in the ranks of cultural optimists. Although in "The Plight of Our Culture" he noted that "Middlebrow art, if not middlebrow learning or thought, is not wholly adulteration and dilution," he also had these harsh words to say about it:

> Middlebrow culture, because of the way in which it is produced, consumed, and transmitted, reinforces everything else in our present civilization that promotes standardization and inhibits idiosyncrasy, temperament, and strong-mindedness; it functions as order and organization but without ordering or organizing. In principle, it cannot master and preserve fresh experience or express and form that which has not already been expressed and formed. Thus it fails: . . . it cannot maintain continuity in the face of novelty, but must always forget and replace its own products.

These are hardly the words of a cheerleader for middlebrow culture.

One suspects that O'Brian's disappointment with Greenberg has more to do with politics than with critical judgment. As Greenberg matured, he did gradually move away from the Marxism of his twenties and early thirties. Greenberg had cut his teeth on the anti-Stalinist Trotskyism that more or less defined the New York intellectuals associated with *Partisan Review*. (At the end of "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," for example, there is a reflexive allusion to "capitalism in decline," and the assurance that "today we look to socialism *simply* for the preservation of culture.") By 1948, however, Greenberg was already describing himself as "an ex- or disabused Marxist."

But—and this is the crucial point—whatever his indulgence in socialist rhetoric, Greenberg always insisted on the relative autonomy of art. "True, I may be a socialist," he wrote in 1946, "but a work of art has its own ends, which it includes in itself and which have nothing to do with the fate of society."

The idea that art has its "own ends" which have "nothing to do with society" is at the center of Greenberg's defense of high culture—and it is what enrages his critics on the academic Left. The idea is hardly original to him. It belongs to a tradition of thinking that dates back to the 18th century, when the term "aesthetics" in the modern sense was coined. When it comes to art, Greenberg is essentially a Kantian, which means that he stresses the disinterestedness, autonomy, and irreducibility of aesthetic experience. Our appreciation of art is not a means

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* *Volume 1: Perceptions and Judgments, 1939-1944* and *Volume 2: Arrogant Purpose, 1945-1949*, University of Chicago Press. See my review in COMMENTARY, December 1987.

† *Volume 3: Affirmations and Refusals, 1950-1956* (305 pp.) and *Volume 4: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957-1969* (341 pp.), University of Chicago Press, $29.95 each.

**On O'Brian's portrayal of Greenberg as an apostle of cold-war politics, see Hilton Kramer's "Clement Greenberg & the Cold War" in the *New Criterion*, March 1993.

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to an end—liberating the masses, say, or bringing about a revolution in social consciousness. On the contrary, art affords a pleasure that is an end in itself.

In one sense, the pleasure afforded by art is a very homely one. In a 1959 essay defending abstract art, Greenberg extols the humanizing potential of contemplation in general:

> I think a poor life is lived by anyone who doesn't regularly take time out to stand and gaze, or sit and listen, or touch, or smell, or brood, without any further end in mind, simply for the satisfaction gotten from that which is gazed at, listened to, touched, smelled, or brooded upon.

It is this sort of experience-for-its-own sake that is the common root of the more distilled kinds of experience Greenberg looks for in art.

But aesthetic experience is not necessarily private or subjective. Indeed, part of the reason we care about art is that it affords us the opportunity of *sharing* in an experience that enlarges and reaffirms our humanity. "There is a *consensus* of taste," Greenberg insists, drawing on a term from Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, though it is not a consensus that can be articulated in propositions. Rather, its meaning depends on firsthand experience, that is, on taste—what Greenberg calls experience that "involves a certain exertion." The absence of this exertion marks the lassitude that Greenberg abominated in middlebrow culture.

Until sometime in the 1940's, when the avant-garde started becoming a caricature of itself, Greenberg sought an antidote to the depredations of middlebrow culture in the avant-garde. In an often-quoted passage, he speaks of the avant-garde artist as "narrowing" and "raising" art "to the expression of an absolute in which all relativities and contradictions would become either resolved or beside the point."

> The avant-garde poet or artist tries in effect to imitate God by creating something valid solely on its own terms, in the way nature itself is valid, in the way a landscape—not its picture—is aesthetically valid; something *given*, increate, independent of meanings, similars or originals. Content is to be dissolved so completely into form that the work of art or literature cannot be reduced in whole or in part to anything not itself.

This search for an absolute leads naturally to a demand for abstraction, to an art that is autonomous or "purified" of references to everyday life.

It is undoubtedly true that throughout his career, Greenberg was a champion of abstract art. "The best of contemporary plastic art," he wrote in 1940, "is abstract." In 1954: "The best art of our day tends, increasingly, to be abstract." In 1959: "The very best painting, the major painting, of our age is almost exclusively abstract." And in 1967: "The very best art of this time continues to be abstract."

At the same time, however, Greenberg acknowledged that, with the possible exception of some early Cubist works by Picasso, Braque, and Leger, "nothing in abstract painting . . . matches the achievements of the old masters." The criterion of aesthetic achievement may lie principally in the purity and intensity of the experience art affords, but the human meaning of art is something broader.

MANY people who know Greenberg's work only through the caricatures produced by his enemies are surprised at the range of his interests. The fact that he could speak well of old-master painting, for example, does not accord with their image of desiccated "Greenbergian formalism." In line with this image, Greenberg is often thought of as an aesthete, one whose view of art is precious, elitist, and impossibly rarefied.

Such criticisms may contain an element of truth, but they are not the whole story. It is true that Greenberg's prose was not inviting. He himself spoke of the "flat, declarative way" in which he wrote. He favored the brief review—his pieces were often only a page or two in length—and he tended to purge his writing of argument, leaving only the judgments, the conclusions. This gave his criticism force; it also made it doctrinaire. In fact, Greenberg's criticism often tended toward the dogmatic.

Dogmatism helped to bolster Greenberg's authority, but it also opened his work to easy parody, as Tom Wolfe famously demonstrated in his attack on Greenberg in *The Painted Word* (1975). If Wolfe's attack was amusing as well as unfair, that is chiefly because some of Greenberg's laconic pronunciamentos on "purity" and "flatness" in modernist art do lend themselves to caricature—or, more seriously, misinterpretation.

As for the charge of elitism, there can be no doubt that it is in one sense justified. As a critic, what Greenberg cared about above all else was the endless process of sifting good from bad, better from worse. "Everything else," he wrote, "is secondary." This insistence on discrimination is what stood behind his disdain for middlebrow taste and middlebrow culture.

Ironically, from the perspective of today, much of what Greenberg attacked as middlebrow in the 40's and 50's looks pretty good by comparison with what followed. That is partly because today's standards are so low. It is no secret that since the 1960's, the attack against high culture has greatly intensified, and by now has taken root in the very institutions that were created to preserve and transmit the monuments of high culture—universities, museums, orchestras, and serious publishing houses. In rushing to embrace the demotic imperatives of political correctness and pop culture, these institutions have committed a wholesale betrayal of their cultural mission. In this situation, Greenberg's adamant defense of high art stands as a refreshing alternative to the current morass, even if some of his animadversions against the middlebrow seem misplaced.

But there is another and deeper sense in which Greenberg was the opposite of an elitist. What he sought was not to deprive ordinary people of art but to maintain the distinctions between better and worse upon which the life of art ultimately depends. Moreover, if

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he celebrated the disinterested satisfaction of aesthetic experience, Greenberg also understood that art was not the whole or even the most important part of life.

For example, responding to the controversy surrounding the 1948 award of the Bollingen Prize to the poet Ezra Pound, who had broadcast anti-Semitic and pro-fascist propaganda during the war, Greenberg noted that "Life includes and is more important than art." And he added:

> In any case, I am sick of the art-adoration that prevails among cultured people, . . . that art silliness which condones almost any moral or intellectual failing on the artist's part as long as he is or seems a successful artist. It is still justifiable to demand that he be a successful human being before anything else, even if at the cost of his art. As it is, psychopathy has become endemic among artists and writers, in whose company the moral idiot is tolerated as perhaps nowhere else in society.

Of course, it is one thing to warn against the dangers of "art-adoration" in interviews and occasional comments, quite another to avoid it in one's own practice as a critic. Greenberg did not perhaps always manage to avoid it. But if aestheticism was the price Greenberg paid for his championship of high art, it is all the more poignant that he should have concluded, as in the Pound case, that aestheticism could be one of the most degrading and insidious enemies of life—and hence, ultimately, of art itself. Greenberg did not go in much for religion, but we can be pretty sure that he would have endorsed Dostoevsky's observation in *The Brothers Karamazov* that "beauty is the battlefield where God and the devil war for the soul of man."

Movies

Flop at the OK Corral

Richard Grenier

ONCE again Hollywood is stupefied. As with *A Perfect World*, last year's Clint Eastwood-Kevin Costner megaflop, so now *Wyatt Earp*, a $60-million Kevin Costner spectacular, carefully released at the start of the peak summer season and replete with gunslingers, gunfights, and the legendary shoot-out at the OK Corral, has come to grief at American box offices. Opening to weak reviews at number four among the week's top-grossing films, and in only its third week diving by 64 percent to number ten (below *Baby's Day Out*), the film has been a box-office humiliation.

As is usual in the film industry, stupefaction lasted only a nanosecond. Exactly as in the case of *A Perfect World*, Hollywood was quickly filled with seers who had known from the start that *Wyatt Earp* was doomed. It was too long (more than three hours). There were those negative reviews. Above all, the movie violated an inflexible law, now suddenly revealed to have been brought down by Moses from the mountaintop: thou shalt not release two films on the same subject within six months. For only last winter, *Tombstone*—a smaller-budget movie with more modest stars but with the exact same story and characters—had been a smash hit.

But one can think of a number of exceptions to this law. And anyway, two other films with the identical story and characters—the classic John Ford film, *My Darling Clementine* (with Henry Fonda), and the Burt Lancaster-Kirk Douglas *Gunfight at the OK Corral*—play regularly on cable but had no discernible effect on the fortunes of *Tombstone*. True, *Tombstone*'s release as a home video was timed to accord exactly with the big-screen release of *Wyatt Earp*. This might be an interesting first, but to my knowledge the Lord has yet to declare Himself on the morality of video releases.

What no one seems to have mentioned is that *Tombstone* is a hugely superior movie to *Wyatt Earp* in every respect. It is better acted, better directed, better costumed, better written. Kurt Russell (Earp) and Val Kilmer (Doc Holliday) are wonderful. But above all, *Tombstone* is a Western in the heroic mold. Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday, and the Earp brothers

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are brave men. They face death without flinching. Their adversaries are weasels. And in the anarchic West, crawling with gamblers, swindlers, prostitutes, drinkers, liars, and cheaters of all sorts, they defend what they crudely understand to be the law, the order of civilized society.

KEVIN Costner's distinction in Hollywood—a distinction which might yet do him in—is that he plainly thinks of himself as a major humanist. A graduate of the University of California at Fullerton with a degree in business administration, he is a clear example of what is now a rather extensive breed: usually conservative in economic affairs, but faithfully liberal on matters social and cultural. Thus, Costner supported Phil Gramm in his campaign for reelection to his Texas seat in the U.S. Senate, but also Bill Clinton for the presidency. (For what it is worth, Kurt Russell, the star of *Tombstone*, is a registered Republican.)

Claiming a few drops of Oklahoma-Indian blood, Costner decided at some point in his career that the white man had given the Indian a raw deal. He then went through hell and high water, and risked a lot of his own money, to make *Dances With Wolves*,* which elevated the Sioux to a level of humanity, civilization, and environmental responsibility never before attributed to them by anyone, whether white or Indian. But the counterculture having done its work, and with the moviegoing young apparently as ignorant of American history as Costner himself, *Dances With Wolves* caught on like wildfire.

Still rectifying stereotypes, Costner then decided it was time for a modestly skilled white man (himself) to serve as humble bodyguard to a hugely successful black rock star (Whitney Houston). And *The Bodyguard*, too, was a hit.

Costner must have read somewhere that at the time of the Crusades, the civilization of Islam was superior to that of Christendom. So in *Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves*, Costner sends his hero on the Crusades and, in the interests of multiculturalism, has him stumble about like a hayseed in comparison with the sophisticated Arab (Morgan Freeman) he brings back with him from the Near East.

That takes us up to *JFK* and *A Perfect World*. By universal assent, the paranoia of the former film is not Costner's (who plays New Orleans attorney Jim Garrison) but director Oliver Stone's; and the disaster of the latter is to be laid at the feet of director-*auteur* Clint Eastwood. But *Wyatt Earp*, co-produced by and starring Costner, is all his.

Variety opened its sensible review of this movie as follows:

> If you're going to ask an audience to sit through a three-hour, nine-minute rendition of a story that has been told many times before, it would help to have a strong point of view on your material and an urgent reason to relate it.

Unfortunately, the review continued, such is not the case with the new *Wyatt Earp*.

My own view is slightly different. Setting up shop as an American Tolstoy, Costner seems to have turned his back on the meretricious and misleading mythology of the Old West, and nobly set out to create a work as rich and complex as life itself. He would show the world what the Old West and its lawmen were "really" like.

One consequence of this vast ambition is that *Wyatt Earp*'s plotting is muddy, and the film is totally obscure about any number of crucial issues—such as why the Earp brothers and Doc Holliday engaged in their legendary gunfight with the Clantons and McLaurys at the OK Corral; or why a man with such a checkered background as Wyatt Earp should have become the marshal, or the sheriff, or whatever he became in Tombstone (this was unclear even to the governor of Arizona); or why anyone with any connection at all to the police force should have as his best buddy Doc Holliday, a drunk, gambler, whoremonger, gunfighter, and all-around "sporting man."

We first encounter Wyatt as a teenager running through an Illinois cornfield on his way to join the Union Army in the Civil War. It is a long run, and we realize it is going to be a long movie. His father (Gene Hackman) catches him, and we are subsequently treated to much moralizing on the part of this *pater familias*. "Nothing counts like blood," he proclaims stentoriously to his daughter and five sons. "The rest are strangers." And: "You should never draw your gun unless you intend to use it. But when you use it, shoot to kill."

The family seems to drift all over the West, the father announcing at one stage that he is setting out for California, "where civilization has flourished for hundreds of years" (this, in the 1870's). Wyatt, who does not leave for California, kills and skins buffalo for a living, hires as his helper the young Bat Masterson (another legendary Western gunfighter and lawman), and gets married. But his wife dies of typhoid (historically in childbirth), and he goes to the dogs. He becomes an alcoholic, commits robbery, steals a horse (a hanging offense in those days), flees, and heads for Dodge City. There he teams up with his old buddy Bat Masterson in the "Dodge City Wars."

Somehow or other, and after many peregrinations, the Earp lot find their way to the godforsaken mining town of Tombstone, Arizona, where their pal, Doc Holliday (Dennis Quaid), and three of the Earp brothers have their great and still highly controversial shootout with the Clantons and McLaurys. The movie ends with Mr. and (the third) Mrs. Wyatt Earp, gray-haired, dignified, senior citizens by now, on a steamship off the coast of Alaska, with Wyatt being congratulated by an enthusiastic young man for his brave deeds of yore.

CURIOUSLY, the real Wyatt Earp lived long enough so that, in retirement in Los Angeles, he actually met the stars of the first Western movies, William S. Hart (*The Gun Fighter*) and even Tom Mix. They regarded him with awe, as

* See my review, "Indian Love Call," in the March 1991 COMMENTARY.

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the legend he had by then become.

How had this happened? The gunfight at the OK Corral, which occurred in 1881, could easily have remained just another obscure, violent, frontier incident, no more glamorous or heroic than a drug shoot-out in any one of a dozen modern American cities. But in the more peaceful parts of America there was a great thirst for dime novels and other adventure tales of the Wild West. This audience had been through Jesse James and Billy the Kid. Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday—seized on by the new generation of hack writers—suddenly became the latest thing.

Historically, it is still very much in dispute whether the Clantons and McLaurys were thieves and murderers or whether the thieves and murderers were Doc Holliday and the Earps, whose criminal connections were abundant. If things had gone only slightly differently, Hollywood and Kevin Costner might well have just released a $60-million Western called *Ike Clanton*. But the Earps and Holliday won the gunfight and, since then, it has been Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday all the way.

Also of historical interest is the fact that Wyatt Earp's third wife, Sadie (as she was known to her friends and husband, but not in this film), was born Josephine Sarah Marcus. She was living, unmarried, with a rival lawman, Johnny Behan, who had been divorced by his wife for pimping. When Sadie Marcus ran off with the new gunslinger, Wyatt Earp, she was identified in the press with heavy irony as an "actress" (always in quotes), much as it might have been reported that she was a "dance-hall girl."

Sadie, a wild runaway from her San Francisco Jewish family, had actually come to the metropolis of Tombstone playing a role in a wandering road company of Gilbert and Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore*. For anyone familiar with the social standing and customs of minor female entertainers of the 19th century, this is about all one needs to know. But Sadie Earp grew very respectable in her old age, insisting to her ghostwriter that hers "must be a nice, clean story." (Incredibly, she lived on until 1944.) And it is true that in their old age, Sadie and Wyatt Earp were a devoted couple: they lie buried side by side in the Hills of Eternity Jewish cemetery near San Francisco.

To SOME extent—but only to some extent—Costner's movie is faithful to the historical record of the Earps and their women. Thus, we see that Brother James runs a saloon in Tombstone (apparently a brothel), and brothers Wyatt and Morgan are sometime faro dealers and gamblers at Tombstone's Oriental Casino. It is clear, too, that Wyatt's second wife, Mattie Blaylock, the one he leaves for Sadie Marcus, was a registered, full-time prostitute, as was James's wife. The other brothers, as a genteel historian put it, also "had liaisons with young women of dubious social standing." Eventually, after Wyatt runs off with Sadie, Mattie commits suicide through a combination of alcohol and laudanum (an opiate).

Innocently, as it were, Wyatt Earp asks his brother James in the movie if he minds being married to a "whore." James takes this well, indeed laughingly. Why, what other men pay for, he gets for free!, he answers gaily: it is all good fun. But it was not good fun. In her *Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Misery: Prostitutes in the American West, 1865-90*, Anne Butler makes a particular point of demolishing, with plentiful documentation, the myth of the bawdy, sexually easy-going West, and her account could not be more relevant to the family story of the Earps.

For if an activity is illegal yet extremely widespread, almost everyone in authority has to be in on it: police, judges, mayors. In the American West, the sheriffs and marshals often ran the whole operation. Given the Earps' extensive relationship with prostitutes, and Wyatt's position as lawman (he was in and out of the post of deputy-sheriff, and his brother Virgil was a U.S. Marshal), it seems highly probable that a great deal of the Earp family business—along with gambling (then also illegal), drinking, mining speculation, "law enforcement," and a variety of other high-risk enterprises—was in simple fact prostitution. Not for nothing had they been known in Dodge City as the "Fighting Pimps."

If there is anything more ludicrous than Kevin Costner setting up as the Tolstoy of the American West, it is his romanticizing of the wonderful spirit of sisterhood among Western prostitutes (a theme that has popped up in a half-dozen new movies, most recently *Bad Girls*, another superflop). Being a whore in the Old West was a nasty business. And there was virtually no way out.

KEVIN Costner seems to be unaware that what he is dealing with in *Wyatt Earp* and the gunfight at the OK Corral is in fact folk legend. Someone, some day, might have the capacity to transmute this base metal of popular myth into the gold of a great humanist work. But neither Costner nor his director, Lawrence Kasdan (*Body Heat, The Big Chill, Grand Canyon*), has the historical erudition, intelligence, or maturity for the job.

But neither did they have the sense to accept the legend as given. In folk legend, the man who wears the star of a lawman of the Old West represents the craving for order and justice. This is something the makers of *Tombstone* (not to mention *My Darling Clementine* and *Gunfight at the OK Corral*) knew instinctively. Kevin Costner either never knew it, or thought he was somehow above it. No wonder he came to grief.

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Untainted by Testosterone

WHO STOLE FEMINISM?: HOW WOMEN HAVE BETRAYED WOMEN. BY CHRISTINA HOFF SOMMERS. *Simon & Schuster. 320 pp. $23.00.*

Reviewed by CATHY YOUNG

ONE cannot open a newspaper or turn on the television these days without seeing another story about the horrors visited upon American women in a man's world. A woman is battered by her husband every fifteen seconds—make that every twelve or, better yet, every ten seconds. One in four women, or perhaps one in three, will be raped at least once in her lifetime, if anorexia does not claim her first. As a result of societal pressure to remain silent and defer to males, adolescent girls are deprived of self-esteem and self-confidence.

For anyone who has felt that there is something wrong with such claims, this book provides welcome ammunition. In it, Christina Hoff Sommers deftly debunks the horror stories as canards, meant to convince everyone that "women remain besieged and subject to a relentless and vicious male backlash."

A philosophy professor at Clark University in Massachusetts, Sommers explores both the capture of academia by "politically-correct" feminists—whose vagaries she unabashedly delights in skewering—and the trickle-down of "war-against-women" myths from the campus to the mainstream media. On both these scores, the book is a scathing and entertaining exposé.

Even those familiar with stories of political correctness on campus may be shocked by Sommers's account of what passes for academic conferences in the radical-feminist subculture. At a 1992 love-fest for the literary scholar Carolyn Heilbrun, for example, panelist after panelist was "introduced . . . as angry in one way or another: Alice Jardine of Harvard University's French department was 'angry and struggling,' Brenda Silver of Dartmouth has been 'struggling and angry since 1972.' " And that was one of the more respectable gatherings: at another conference Sommers attended, participants were asked to "take a moment to give ourselves a big hug," film screenings featured such titles as *Sex and the Sandinistas* and *We're Talking Vulva*, and exhibition booths offered witchcraft paraphernalia as well as "videos on do-it-yourself menstrual extractions and home abortions for those who want to avoid 'patriarchal medicine.' "

This would be funny if, in effect, the lunatics were not running the asylum. But Sommers chronicles in depressing detail the "colonization" of universities, academic councils, and other institutions by radical feminists. Their goals go far beyond the inclusion of more female writers, artists, or historical figures into the curriculum ("You can't just add women and stir," sneers one academic activist); instead, the very foundations of Western scholarship, literature, art, and science must be exposed as fatally tainted with testosterone.

Thus, Peggy McIntosh of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women speaks of "vertical thinkers" (white men) who focus on "excellence, accomplishment, success, and achievement" versus "lateral thinkers" (women and minorities) who seek "to be in a decent relationship with the invisible elements of the universe." If this sounds like New Age gobbledygook, it is nothing compared to McIntosh's description of the summit of her five phases of knowledge: "Phase Five will give us Reconstructed Global and Biological History to Survive By."

Most radical-feminist theorists, Sommers reports, admit that they have no idea what a discipline like science or philosophy will look like once it is transformed by their ideological program. Perhaps the field of women's studies is itself an indication: apart from a few academically solid courses, young women in the field are barraged with "bad prose, psychobabble, and 'New Age' nonsense," and are invited to talk about their menstrual cycles and to share experiences of sexual abuse and battery. Disagreement, particularly from male students, is equated with "classroom harassment." The goal is not intellectual debate; it is, one professor proudly states, "persuading students that women are oppressed." For women who stubbornly refuse to be persuaded, academic feminists display barely concealed contempt.

What some of the students in these courses do with their degrees is even more alarming. Investigating a 1993 study purporting to show that 40 percent of women experience "severe depression" in any given week, Sommers spoke to the principal researcher, Lois Hoeffler, who had done her master's thesis on "feminist social theories of the self." Hoeffler told Sommers she was "very concerned" lest this be "just another study reflecting 'white male norms' of research." She griped about "phallocentric theory," and expressed satisfaction that her work "provided her with a unique opportunity to implement her ideas."

One fears it may not be all that unique. Sommers, in fact, takes a scalpel to several major and influential studies produced by researchers who, like Hoeffler, clearly want nothing to do with "white male norms"—if by such norms we are to understand objectivity, or the fair reporting of findings. In particular, she dismantles a study commissioned by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) which supposedly shows a drastically worsening "gender gap" in self-esteem and self-confidence among teenagers.

The first independent investiga-

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tor to have looked not just at the AAUW's brochures and press releases but at the actual study, Sommers demonstrates that its alarmist figures were obtained by reporting only the percentage who checked "always true" on such items as "I am happy the way I am" and "I am good at a lot of things." Adding "sort of true" and "sometimes true/sometimes false" responses produced nearly identical scores for boys and girls. (And why, Sommers asks, should an answer of "always true" to "I am happy the way I am" be seen as a sign of healthy self-esteem rather than of an oversized ego, especially since no one has yet found a positive link between such "self-esteem" and academic success?)

Equally devastating, and equally entertaining, is Sommers's analysis of studies purporting to show that girls in schools are victims of pervasive gender bias. Doggedly tracking obscure publications, she finds that "gender equity experts" are not above misrepresenting their own research in order to show how oppressed females are. She also discovers that the media are not above a little creative editing to demonstrate how teachers neglect girls in class.

The media have been equally credulous on such issues as rape and wife-beating, reporting the most outrageous claims—for example, that battery of pregnant women is the leading cause of birth defects in this country—without bothering to verify them. These are grim subjects, but one cannot help being amused by Sommers's elegant dissection of the "feminist fable" that the phrase "rule of thumb" originates in an English law permitting wife-beating as long as the husband uses a stick no thicker than his thumb!

ALTHOUGH *Who Stole Feminism?* is a full frontal assault on the feminist establishment, and on such feminist icons as Gloria Steinem, Susan Faludi, and Naomi Wolf, Sommers repeatedly stresses that she herself is no anti-feminist. Rather, "I am a feminist who does not like what feminism has become."

Coming to reclaim feminism, not to bury it, Sommers proposes a distinction between (old-fashioned, liberal) "equity feminism," which she wholeheartedly endorses, and (new-fashioned, radical) "gender feminism," which she deplores. In Sommers's classification, the equity feminist "wants for women what she wants for everyone: fair treatment, without discrimination." The gender feminist, who wants not just to change laws and institutional practices but to overhaul personal desires and preferences, believes that modern American women remain oppressed by a "heteropatriarchy" or a "sex/gender system" and sees them "as a political class whose interests are at odds with the interests of men."

Curiously, given Sommers's credentials as a philosopher, the least satisfying parts of her book are

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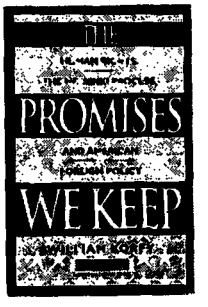

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the ones dealing with theory. Not only is her analysis of feminist writings rather cursory, but people of very different views—those who advocate "self-segregation of women" and those who seek a completely androgynous "world of gender-neutral characters"—are lumped together by her under the blanket term of "gender feminism." So, too, are two groups often bitterly at odds with each other: radical feminists who emphasize women's victimization, and regard traditionally feminine qualities as marks of slavery, and "difference feminists" like the psychologist Carol Gilligan who celebrate the "female values" of caring and nurturance.

Nor is the distinction between liberal "equity feminism" and radical "gender feminism" always clear-cut. The liberal feminists Sommers praises, from Mary Wollstonecraft to Betty Friedan, have sought not simply to obtain equal legal rights for women but to change attitudes toward sex roles. True, they are far less utopian than the "gender feminists," and more oriented toward the expansion of individual options than toward enforcement of politically-correct doctrines; but such nuances are left largely unexplored here.

Conservative defenders of more traditional gender-role arrangements may have more fundamental problems with *Who Stole Feminism?* Unlike such critics of feminism as Maggie Gallagher and George Gilder, Sommers regards most of the changes associated with the women's movement—from the influx of women into professional spheres to unrestricted abortion rights—as unquestionably positive developments.

For Sommers, the watchword is freedom of choice. She urges respect for religious women who choose to lead traditional lives and "emphatically do not think of themselves as subjugated," while also applauding women who reverse conventional roles by treating men as "sex objects," as well as "lipstick lesbians" who rebel against rigid feminist ideology by embracing beauty and decoration.

It is this emphasis on women's freedom of choice that makes *Who Stole Feminism?* a positive and hopeful book, one that offers an alternative both to simple nostalgia for "separate spheres" and to totalitarian visions of either "woman-centered" or gender-blind societies. One might argue that the radical feminist takeover of the universities and media which Sommers herself so amply documents leaves her brand of kinder, gentler feminism little ground for hope. But at the very least, *Who Stole Feminism?* is a forceful and much-needed step in the right direction.

Is Christianity Responsible?

ANTI-SEMITISM IN AMERICA. By LEONARD DINNERSTEIN. *Oxford University Press. 369 pp. $25.00.*

A SCAPEGOAT IN THE NEW WILDERNESS: THE ORIGINS AND RISE OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN AMERICA. By FREDERIC COPLE JAHER. *Harvard University Press. 339 pp. $29.95.*

Reviewed by JACK WERTHEIMER

NOT since the period between the two world wars, generally regarded as the heyday of anti-Semitism in the U.S., have demagogues manipulated the rhetoric of hatred so shamelessly and publicly as in our own day. Louis Farrakhan and his minions address mass meetings around the country, and, astonishingly, are welcomed at university campuses that pride themselves on their intolerance of real or imagined prejudice. The Aryan Nation exploits the media to spread its paranoid message of armed resistance to the "Zionist Occupation Government" in Washington. Holocaust deniers garner publicity for their vicious lies. The ancient canard of Jewish complicity in the poisoning of wells now finds expression in lunatic claims that AIDS was not only invented by Jews, but is intentionally spread by Jewish physicians. Finally, only three years ago, in one of the worst incidents of mob violence ever directed against Jews in the United States, blacks in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, rioted against their Jewish neighbors.

Coming in the midst of such troubling developments, these two new studies, each published within weeks of the other by a prestigious academic press, might seem to suggest that as far as anti-Semitism is concerned, a new and bleaker assessment of American realities is under way. But this is not quite so. In fact, Leonard Dinnerstein, a professor of history at the University of Arizona, ends his judicious survey on an optimistic note:

> By comparing the strength of anti-Semitism in the United States today with what it had been in previous decades or centuries, the obvious conclusion is that it has declined in potency and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

And Frederic Jaher, too, though he is much more ambivalent than Dinnerstein, provides evidence for a basically sanguine view. True, both authors also express alarm about certain trends in American culture; but it is here, as we shall see, that their judgment falters.

DINNERSTEIN'S volume, it is safe to say, will stand for a long time as the definitive treatment of its topic. Among its many virtues is a willingness to take note of episodes not just of heightened but of declining animosity toward Jews in the United States; thus, Dinnerstein devotes an entire chapter to the ebbing of anti-Semitism in the post-World War II era. He is also particularly attuned to Jewish reactions to anti-Semitism, thereby avoiding the pitfall of presenting Jews as merely the passive victims of prejudice.

Dinnerstein's most provocative and original chapters concern anti-Semitism in the South and "African-American Attitudes." In fact, he links the two topics by arguing that anti-Jewish views learned in Southern churches continue to inform the views of African-Americans who have dispersed throughout the country. In particular, Dinnerstein unflinchingly confronts the evidence of opinion polls "from the 1960's through the

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1990's [which have] consistently found African-Americans more anti-Semitic than American whites," and he forthrightly labels as "Jew-bashing" the hate-filled rhetoric of some black leaders in recent years.

Unfortunately, Dinnerstein's generally tough-minded approach on this score gives way in the end to a species of wishfulness. He concludes his analysis of black anti-Semitism on an upbeat note, registering the "stance of tolerance" adopted by "men of such stature in the African-American community" as Henry Louis Gates, Cornel West, and Jesse Jackson, and expressing the hope that thanks to their influence, "black anti-Semitism might weaken in the distant future." But whether the first two (professors, after all) have the clout or the third has the political will to challenge the hatemongers in their own community successfully is highly doubtful.

Still, this issue aside, there can be no question that Dinnerstein's generally positive evaluation of the contemporary Jewish condition in the United States is a sound one.

IN *A Scapegoat in the New Wilderness*, Frederic Jaher, who teaches history at the University of Illinois, confines himself for the most part to a narrower chronological span than Dinnerstein. After a pedestrian recounting of the career of anti-Semitism from the pagan world to the early modern era, Jaher focuses sharply on North America prior to the Civil War, in an effort to determine precisely when anti-Semitism first developed in the U.S.

The novelty of his account lies here. In contrast to other historians, including Dinnerstein, who have routinely dated the emergence of public anti-Semitism to the war years, or still later to the Gilded Age, Jaher goes back to the late 1830's. It was then, he argues, that "American anti-Semitism assumed its modern contours, if not its subsequent intensity and scope."

In support of this thesis, Jaher examines "the popular image of the loathsome Jew" propagated by Christian preachers and by abolitionists, educators, literary figures, and others who incorporated negative stereotypes of Jews into their writing. The material he has unearthed and assembled is indeed prodigious. Unfortunately, however, he fails to demonstrate that such stereotypes were disseminated widely—a stray remark in an arcane text seems fodder enough for an indictment—or to prove that negative images had an actual impact on the lives of Jews in their "new wilderness."

To the contrary, Jaher himself concedes that in every period of American history, other groups were targeted for more severe treatment than the Jews. During the Colonial period, he writes, "in general Jews were no more subject to aspersions based on their creed than Catholics or dissenters." From the founding of the Republic to 1840, Jews were "lesser victims of deprivation, humiliation, and violence than were blacks, Indians, and Catholics." And even in the decades immediately preceding the Civil War, supposedly a "crucible of sectional conflict [which] forged modern American anti-Semitism," there was a "contrary but coextant reality—the movement of American Jewry toward equality."

In light of these observations, and the fragmentary character of Jaher's evidence, the reader is left wondering on what basis he allows himself to assert boldly that "America is anti-Semitic."

THE answer to this question lies in something Jaher shares with Dinnerstein. In seeking to explain the existence and spread of anti-Semitism in the United States, both place primary responsibility on "Christian doctrines."

Jaher frames his argument in terms of a formal syllogism: "Christianity has a powerful anti-Semitic impulse, America is a Christian country, and America is anti-Semitic." Dinnerstein, though as usual more nuanced, nevertheless strikes a similarly monocausal note: anti-Semitism, he writes, "was brought to the New World by the first settlers, instilled by Christian teachings, and continually reinforced by successive waves of Protestants and Catholics who populated American shores."

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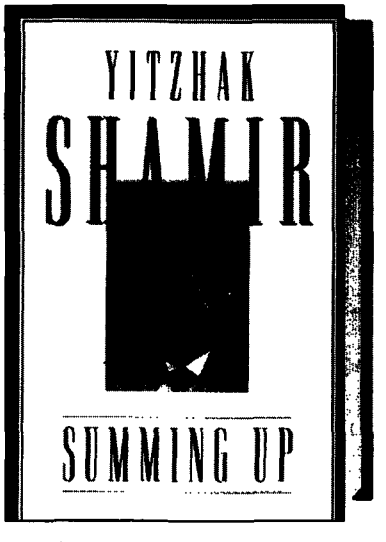

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That Christian religious teachings have historically played a major role in the spread of anti-Semitism is, of course, beyond dispute. But the modern era—and America is nothing if not a creature of the modern era—has also given rise to distinct versions of Jew-hatred, most of them rooted in secular ideologies, and some of them even blatantly anti-Christian. A number of studies have helped clarify the role of anti-Semitism in the cultural "codes" of different European nations in the modern period; regrettably, both these authors have missed the opportunity to do the same for anti-Semitism in America.

Not that they fail to recognize, at least tacitly, that a variety of factors has been at work on the American scene. Thus, when they come to explain General Ulysses S. Grant's order expelling Jews from the territory of Tennessee in 1862, or the anti-Semitic rantings of Madison Grant in *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916), or the 1915 lynching of Leo Frank, neither Dinnerstein nor Jaher troubles to forge a causal link to Christian teachings. Jaher, moreover, although he draws upon a wide assortment of texts from religious sources, also has much to say about anti-Semitic views embedded in what he describes as "secular literature"; and Dinnerstein offers numerous instances of contemporary anti-Semitic views by individuals seemingly far removed from Christianity—e.g., Black Muslims and Afrocentrists, leftist enemies of Israel, and even denigrators of Jewish women as JAPs.

How, then, are we to explain both authors' recurring insistence on the pernicious role of Christian teachings in the spread of American anti-Semitism? In the end, it would seem that they are speaking less from the historical record than from a set of contemporary Jewish worries. Thus, writing of Samuel Adams's call, in 1776, to inaugurate a "reign of political Protestantism," Dinnerstein observes that "such ideas would never be far from the surface in the United States." Jaher, for his part, incessantly refers to America as a "Christian land." Both authors seem to reflect growing fears in the Jewish community that after more than 200 years, the walls separating church and state may yet crumble before the forces bent on "Christianizing" the country.

If such fretting is all too common today—witness the recent alarmist report on the Christian Right by the Anti-Defamation League*—so, conversely, is the faith that many American Jews still place in the supposedly countervailing and redemptive powers of secular ideologies. Both Dinnerstein and Jaher are in tune with this latter sentiment as well. Jaher attributes the relative weakness of anti-Semitism in the U.S. to the fact that Christianity here was "uniquely shaped by American religious and secular circumstances," and Dinnerstein includes the secular Enlightenment among the factors that have tempered Christianity's inherent anti-Jewish biases. Neither author explores the role played by secular ideologies in the spread of intolerance, anti-Semitism, and mass murder in the modern age.

PARADOXICALLY, the overt suspicion of Christianity expressed by these authors may be read as a symptom of just how secure Jews feel in the United States today. After all, in Jewish folk wisdom Christianity has long been seen as the source of all anti-Semitism; seldom, however, have Jews dared to say so publicly. Still, in the closing years of a century that has witnessed the most devastating assaults in all of Jewish history, primarily enacted in the name of non- or anti-Christian racial and political ideologies, such a one-sided fixation may be symptomatic of more than ingrained reflex.

Many Jews in the United States today, confused about their own religious identities, are palpably discomfited by public religious expression of any kind. America, they imagine, would be a more congenial place if only it conformed to their idea of a secularized society. But theirs is a double fantasy. Like it or not, America continues to be a religious society; and, to repeat, secularism, far more than Christianity, has proved itself capable of inspiring mortal attacks on Jewish life. Those who judge Christianity harshly would do well to set the relatively negligible threat posed by Christian bigots against the constructive role played by most Protestant and Catholic churches in keeping the country civilized—and therefore safer for Jews and other Americans.

* See Midge Decter's article, "The ADL vs. the 'Religious Right,'" beginning on p. 45 of this issue.—ED.

Newspeak

NEWS AND THE CULTURE OF LYING. BY PAUL H. WEAVER. *Free Press. 243 pp. $22.95.*

Reviewed by JOHN CORRY

HARDLY anyone speaks any more of "the press." Instead, there is something called the "media"—an assemblage of voices and technologies gathered without regard to professional discipline, and amorphous enough to include Oprah Winfrey, George Will, and young geniuses who make videos for MTV. In a way, the media are the most democratic of institutions: anyone with a podium can join, and while free spirits are not always encouraged, the general rule is that one voice is as good as another, and success is measured only by how loudly that voice may be heard. Lost in the din is the press, or at least the press as we once knew it.

To be sure, that old press was never wholly satisfactory to begin with, but one of its virtues was that it usually knew its place. Journalists lived below the salt, and for the most part were content to remain there. There was always a Walter Lippmann, say, or an Arthur Krock or Joseph Alsop who talked to Presidents, but everyone knew they were exceptions. By and large, journalism was a modest endeavor, less interested in setting national agendas or in telling us how to behave than in retailing a few per-

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tinent facts, along with the accompanying rumors and speculation.

All this has changed. Ever since the press has been subsumed into the media it has become more pervasive and insistent. Its basic product, the news, remains what it always was: a few pertinent facts, along with rumors and speculation. But the product is now presented in far more wondrous ways than before, and while the press was once supposed merely to inform, now it aims to enlighten. A homicide story will become an examination of our sick society, an article on Pentagon spending a treatise on how to prevent war.

Paul H. Weaver also believes that the press is in a sorry state, although not necessarily for any of the above reasons. In *News and the Culture of Lying*, he argues instead that journalists collude with public officials to persuade us that society is beset by constant crises. But the crises, he says, are not true crises; they are only ordinary problems, cynically exploited by journalists and officials for their own separate purposes. The journalists—operating in the tradition of sensationalized news invented by Joseph Pulitzer—get an exciting, if spurious, story; and the public officials gain favorable publicity as they respond to what is perceived, incorrectly, as a crisis.

Journalists and politicians who sustain this unending cycle of crisis and response cooperate, Weaver writes, in a "culture of lying":

> The word *lying* is harsh, but it's the correct term for the behaviors we are talking about here. A lie is defined as a misrepresentation of one's state of mind or belief as to what is authentic and true. When officials script and enact events and simulate sentiments for the media's consumption, they meet the simple dictionary test of misrepresentation. When journalists present these made-for-media impersonations as authentic news, they meet it, too.

THE idea that journalists thrive on crises is not new, and neither is the notion that politicians hold media events to help stage the crises. Weaver's special contribution is his insistence that if journalists were allowed to follow their better instincts, they could separate truth from lies. "Newsmakers may think that their well-crafted lies are impenetrable to reporters, but that's rarely the case," he writes. "The reporter almost always sees through the newsmaker's scam. It's practically impossible to fool a reporter."

Weaver apparently is serious about this, although a more realistic view would be that reporters get fooled all the time. They pin their faith on causes and politicians, showing no more acumen than anyone else, and then are forced to reverse their positions: consider how the Washington press corps has lately been souring on its erstwhile favorite, Bill Clinton. Though Weaver writes as an insider—with frequent references to his ten years at *Fortune* magazine—he seems innocent of newsroom practice. His passion for honest reporting may be genuine, but his prescription for how to achieve it is more wishful than real.

Weaver devotes almost an entire chapter—"How a News Story Lies"—to examining a 30-year-old account in the *New York Times* about the end of a sit-in by supporters of the Free Speech Movement at the University of California at Berkeley; the police moved in and arrested 796 students at Sproul Hall. Weaver allows that the story is factually correct, economically written, and dispassionate in its approach. Indeed, he calls it "a magnificent piece of reporting." At the same time, he says, "the story lies—it tells a lie, it is a lie."

What disturbs him is that the *Times* reporter, Wallace Turner, failed to inform the reader of what, to Weaver, was the real story behind the story: that the students had staged a media event; that Turner and his editors knew this, but declined to acknowledge it; and that when Governor Pat Brown called on the police to raid the campus, he was trying both to discredit the Free Speech Movement and to forestall criticism from Ronald Reagan, whom he would face in an upcoming election.

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Therefore, Weaver declares, the *Times* that day gave everyone involved "a stage on which to enact a propaganda play designed to manipulate appearances and the public, secure in the knowledge that the story wouldn't decode, deconstruct, or otherwise undermine the performance."

Weaver is citing a particularly musty story—the dateline, after all, is December 3, 1964—to uphold his contentions about the culture of lying; but there is something telling in his choice. Much of his thinking seems frozen in the past. He wrote his book while on a fellowship at the conservative Hoover Institution at Stanford, but he approaches his topic like a 60's radical. Adversary journalists of that time also believed that reporters should explain the hidden motives of the people they wrote about, and should deconstruct events. In other words, they should express their opinions.

In the real world of reporting, that did not work out well. In fact, it was a disaster. Weaver acknowledges this, just barely, but he does not appear to understand it.

Walter Cronkite, for instance, once deconstructed the Vietnam war for his television audience. In the wake of the Tet offensive of 1968, America's most trusted newsman told millions of viewers that the only "rational" thing to do in Vietnam was to "negotiate" a peace. As it happens, the Tet offensive represented a Communist defeat, so Cronkite's urgings made no "sense." That really did not matter, however. In journalism's new climate, it was permissible, even desirable, for an anchorman to express an opinion.

Meanwhile, it must be noted that Weaver scarcely mentions television at all, even though it is the principal reason the press has been transformed into the media. Television broadcasters, he says at one point, "could model their way of presenting the news on the relatively cool, emotionally uninflected voices of the readers on the news programs of the BBC," but that is about all he says. In short, *News and the Culture of Lying* may be provocative, but it stays away from too many tough questions.

Gimme Shelter

THE HOMELESS. BY CHRISTOPHER JENCKS. *Harvard University Press. 161 pp. $17.95.*

Reviewed by BEN WILDAVSKY

AN ODD paradox marks America's recent experience with homelessness during the 1980's: even as the nation's unemployment rate was cut in half, the number of homeless people on our streets continued to rise. The well-known sociologist Christopher Jencks takes this puzzle as his starting point in *The Homeless*, a meticulous piece of detective work framed by three fundamental questions: How much did homelessness rise during the 1980's? Why did it increase? And what should we do about it?

The value of the answers in this slim yet dense volume does not lie in their novelty. Many readers will surely be unsurprised by the large role Jencks assigns to mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse, and the decline of single-room-occupancy hotels. Nevertheless, the discomfiting tale bears retelling, particularly in light of the Clinton administration's vow to reduce the number of homeless Americans by one-third before the end of the President's first term. For anyone wondering whether the pledge might be ill-considered, Jencks serves as a reliable, hard-headed guide through a thicket of studies and competing theories, all the while expertly demonstrating what social science can do to give us insight into a social problem.

Jencks's social science, it should be noted, leans toward the quantitative variety. Indeed, he has already been attacked in the *New Republic* for allegedly ignoring the human face of the homeless. But while Jencks—himself a onetime reporter—writes admiringly of Elliott Liebow and other ethnographers of homelessness, his avowed goal is not to tell stories about individuals. He aims instead to describe the patterns behind the disturbing sights Americans see daily on their streets.

WHOM should we count when we try to count the homeless? Few questions about statistics have generated such intense debate. Many activists, for example, want to expand the count by including individuals living doubled up in the homes of family members or friends. Some of these people may indeed be in dire straits, moving back and forth among the streets, shelters, and the homes where they are occasionally taken in. Many others, however, have far more innocuous reasons for sharing housing. Jencks settles on a commonsense definition that counts people sleeping on the streets and in shelters (including welfare hotels) but excludes those who have doubled up. His tartly declared purpose is to focus on "what we might call the 'visible homeless'—people whose presence on the streets upsets the more prosperous classes."

How many of these people are there? Jencks dispenses quickly with the late Mitch Snyder's claim that two to three million Americans were homeless during the 1980's. That figure was uncritically repeated throughout the decade by journalists and politicians, despite Snyder's candid acknowledgment that it was based on the most casual of inquiries and had "no meaning." Instead, Jencks offers an "educated guess" using a variety of existing surveys supplemented by his own calculations.

The homeless population, he finds, is much lower than advocates have claimed, but it did grow dramatically during the 1980's, increasing from a 125,000 weekly average in 1980 to about 400,000 in 1987-88, with a small decline toward the end of the decade.

Jencks has a healthy understanding of how even sound numbers can become ideological fodder for policy advocates:

> Suppose a shelter has 40 beds that are always full. Ten are filled by a succession of individuals who remain homeless for exactly a week. Thirty are filled by people who remain homeless for a year. Over the course of a year, 520 people will

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enter the shelter and stay for a week while 30 enter and stay for a year. The shelter can now describe its clientele in two very different ways. If it wants to make its clients sound "normal," it can say that 95 percent of those who enter the shelter return to conventional housing within a week. If it wants to argue that its clients need all kinds of social services, it can say that 75 percent of its resources are devoted to people who remain homeless for a year.

Manipulating the homeless count for political ends is thus an easy game. A one-time tally will necessarily include some who are newly arrived on the street, some on the verge of better things, and some who are perennially down and out. Lumping together those moving in and out of homelessness over the course of several years produces big numbers: the Clinton administration reported recently that seven million Americans were homeless at some point between 1985 and 1990.

BUT however the numbers are spun, there is ample evidence that the homeless are far from normal, if by normal we mean representative of society at large. A 1987 study by Martha Burt of the Urban Institute found that about three-quarters of the urban homeless were single; families with children made up just 18 percent of the total. Among homeless adults, 84 percent were male, 45 percent were black, and 10 percent were Hispanic. Half had never married and 97 percent of those using shelters or soup kitchens were not currently with a spouse. Forty-one percent had spent time in jail.

The homeless are different in other ways, too. Perhaps the saddest story Jencks tells is that of the homeless mentally ill. Twenty-two percent of the adults in Burt's survey had spent time in a mental hospital. Jencks counts himself among those "sidewalk sociologists" who had initially assumed that an even greater percentage of bag ladies and panhandlers were once mental patients; but many now on the streets, he observes, while not literally deinstitutionalized, would have been put in mental institutions at a time when different rules prevailed.

Indeed, although deinstitutionalization is not new, the true disaster, Jencks argues, only struck after the mid-1970's, when would-be civil libertarians sharply curtailed involuntary commitment of the mentally ill. That change—combined with ill-advised government efforts to save money by discharging as many mental patients as possible, even when those patients had nowhere else to go—left many crazy and dangerous people in our midst. ("America has always been a land of second chances," Jencks notes with grim irony. "Violent psychotics now get a second chance just like everyone else.")

JENCKS observes that many discussions of homelessness are really arguments over who is to blame for the problem. On this question he is intent on steering a middle course, acknowledging the role of personal responsibility without letting society off too easily. Throughout this book, he uses formulations along the lines of: liberals say *x*, conservatives say *y*; both are half-right. This splitting-the-difference approach is not always convincing, as when Jencks writes that sellers and users are not the only ones responsible for substance abuse, since such abuse is "an integral part of our culture." But in general he is at once persuasive and even-handed.

Thus, he is quick to dismiss the claim from the Left that Ronald Reagan worsened homelessness by cutting housing subsidies (which actually grew during the 1980's), but he is also unconvinced by William Tucker's argument from the Right that rent control contributes to homelessness. A far more decisive factor, in his view, is the decline of single-room-occupancy hotels, which provided an often sordid but dirt-cheap housing option for the down and out. These skid-row hotels have largely fallen victim to a combination of reformist city-planning codes and neighborhood Nimbyism.

What about the puzzling rise in

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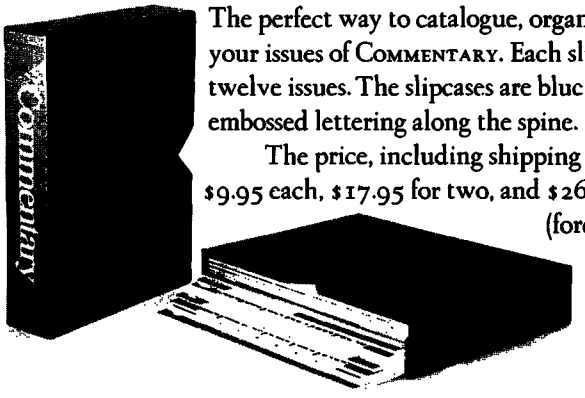

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homelessness that occurred during the economic recovery of the 1980's? Along with the factors discussed above, he believes the arrival of crack cocaine played a role and that long-term joblessness contributed to homelessness among single men. He also believes that the rise of single motherhood and the declining purchasing power of welfare benefits help explain family homelessness. Here Jencks finds only partial answers, some of which have little to do with the economy *per se*. And he even gives sympathetic consideration to the theory that homelessness grew in the 1980's because a larger number of more attractive shelters became available, perhaps lowering the resistance of some to becoming homeless and easing the way for others to throw troublesome relatives out of their house.

In a short section at the end of this largely descriptive work, Jencks offers several ideas for tackling homelessness under the modest heading, "Some Partial Solutions." While he has no qualms about government involvement in the enterprise, his approach is refreshingly incremental.

He would expand rent subsidies to help single mothers and their children, for example, but he realizes there is little possibility that Congress will soon increase an already massive low-income-housing budget to do so. As an alternative, Jencks proposes spreading existing rent subsidies more evenly, so as to help larger numbers of people. He would also increase Supplemental Security Income benefits for the unemployable mentally ill, but would attach more strings in order to ensure that money intended for rent was not used for drugs or other destructive purposes.

In other cases, Jencks would like the government to undo some things it has done that have exacerbated homelessness. He believes housing codes should be scaled back to a "bare minimum" to allow new cubicle hotels to be built. And, where necessary, he would revive involuntary commitment—a crucial reform that is under increasingly serious discussion.

He also sketches a plan to create publicly organized day-labor centers for those single adults who are able to work. These would offer to any willing worker enough casual labor to earn vouchers for meals and a night in a cubicle hotel. This idea could be both problematic to implement and expensive, but it has great moral appeal. Jencks's aim here is to create a social contract involving reciprocal obligation between the state and its most troubled citizens. "Few Americans believe their society has an obligation to feed and house everyone, regardless of how they behave," he writes. "But most of us do feel an obligation to help people who either cannot help themselves or are trying to do so and simply need an opportunity."

As the title of his concluding chapter suggests, Jencks has no illusions that his wish-list would fix all of what ails the homeless—particularly their substance-abuse and psychological problems. At heart he remains more a social scientist than a crusader for social reform, and he is candid about the limitations of efforts to treat society's ills. Still, Jencks believes there are steps that can be taken, though these will demand realistic expectations and the intelligent restraint needed to sidestep ill-conceived remedies which "create both perverse incentives and egregious inequities." Only thus can we reconcile—as Jencks says we must—the competing "claims of compassion and prudence."

Offing the Pigs, and Others

THE SHADOW OF THE PANTHER: HUEY NEWTON AND THE PRICE OF BLACK POWER IN AMERICA. BY HUGH PEARSON. *Addison-Wesley. 422 pages. $24.00.*

Reviewed by ARCH PUDDINGTON

For many Americans, the Black Panthers are best remembered for a day in 1967 when a battalion of menacing, leather-jacketed black toughs roamed the corridors of the state legislature in Sacramento, California, ostentatiously carrying just about every firearm imaginable. Here, the Panthers seemed to be saying, were serious revolutionaries who not only disdained the nonviolence of moderate civil-rights leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., but insisted that if racial conflict came, the institutions of white America would be consumed along with those of the inner city.

The State House episode—all perfectly legal, according to California's relaxed gun laws of the time—convinced many alarmed Americans that the Panthers represented a distinct threat to domestic order, and reinforced support for a toughened police stance against black militance. But there was another Panther image whose effect, while not as widespread, was at least as crucial for the organization's future. This image was encapsulated in a photograph of the group's founder, Huey P. Newton, seated on a wicker chair like some guerrilla prince, a spear in one hand, a shotgun in the other, warriors' shields at each side, dressed in Panther regalia.

This photograph was to become one of the most famous political posters of the 60's. It adorned countless dormitory walls, and captured the imagination of a white Left grown bored with traditional black leaders. The Panthers, with their brilliant, fearless chieftain, came to be regarded as a kind of domestic Vietcong, urban radicals who had nothing but contempt for sterile theorizing and ineffectual strategies of civil disobedience.

To be sure, the Panthers' sinister side—their penchant for violence—drew some criticism. But in general the Left was convinced that instances of Panther violence were the result of police provocation; and for many on the Left there was, as well, the larger issue of whether any black could be considered guilty of any crime in a sick, racist America.

According to Hugh Pearson, however, violence and outright criminality were not incidental to the Black Panther party, but of its very essence. A young black journalist from the West Coast, Pearson

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has now written a history of the Panther movement which focuses on its seamier side without degenerating into sensationalism. In this regard, his work offers a welcome antidote to recent books by the former Panther leaders Elaine Brown and David Hilliard, both of which are dominated by a tone of self-justification (although they are also notable for their emphasis on the violent behavior of the Panthers both in their relations with the police and among themselves).

Basically, Pearson points out, Panther violence derived from the kind of men recruited to the organization: tough, urban, street blacks, often ex-convicts, uneducated and therefore unlikely to challenge the intellectual authority of Newton, Eldridge Cleaver, and other leaders. As one of the more famous Panthers, Bobby Seale, put it, Newton wanted to recruit "brothers who had been out there robbing banks, brothers who had been pimping, brothers who had been selling dope, brothers who ain't gonna take no shit, brothers who had been fighting the pigs."

Under Panther guidance, men with grudges against the police were given ideological sanction to respond violently to police initiatives. In the case of Oakland, home base to the Panthers throughout their history, the police tended to be white, hostile to blacks, often recruited from Southern states specifically to help keep the city's growing postwar black population in line. In this volatile environment, clashes were inevitable, and they occurred repeatedly throughout the late 1960's, with casualties on both sides.

The Panthers, for their part, invited police attention. As Pearson recounts the story, armed groups cruised Oakland's streets, seeking out confrontations. They were fortified in the belief that, given the temper of the times, a policeman's word was no longer sufficient to convict a black man, no matter what the offense. Huey Newton's ascension had itself been greatly helped by his having killed a white officer during a Panther-police skirmish. The incident marked one of the first "revolutionary" police killings; it was also one of the first times a black police-killer avoided prosecution, Newton's initial conviction having been set aside by an appeals court.

Yet despite their talk about revolutionary justice and "offing the pigs," in reality the Panthers were far more violent toward blacks than toward whites. Under Newton's leadership, the Panthers established a wide-ranging criminal empire throughout Oakland's black neighborhoods. Pimps, drug dealers, after-hours clubs—all were expected to contribute to Panther coffers, under threat of injury or death. Legitimate black businesses were also expected to ante up. Those who resisted often faced crippling boycotts or acts of vandalism.

The Panthers reserved their most brutal tactics for internal struggles. Like other radical groups, they suffered their share of splits over issues of personality, ideology, and power. But where other groups settled differences through expulsions, Panther rifts often ended in beatings or murder. Nor was this sort of treatment reserved for the semi-criminal elements who comprised the core of the Panthers' male membership. In one hair-raising incident, Pearson describes how Eldridge Cleaver forced the civil-rights leader James Forman to play Russian roulette (the gun was apparently unloaded) because of rumors of Forman's disloyalty. Forman suffered a nervous breakdown which resulted in his more-or-less permanent retirement from political life.

THAT any organization comprised of criminals, former criminals, and aspiring criminals should have made its mark through strong-arm tactics is hardly surprising. The Panthers, however, had an added ingredient: Huey Newton. Although certainly not the brilliant political theorist of New Left mythology, Newton had obvious intellectual gifts, along with an instinctual understanding of the psychology of the white Left. He once debated the psychologist Erik Erikson, and gave a series of seminars at Yale, at the same time that he was directing a bloody purge of Panther elements disaffected from the Oakland leadership.

Pearson, interestingly, seems not to take Newton's intellectual pretensions too seriously, and ignores the contents of Newton's writings and speeches. On the other hand, he regards Newton as a shrewd and even visionary political tactician. It was Newton who was responsible for abandoning the Panthers' early confrontational style in favor of constructing what emerged as a potent inner-city political machine. The Panthers, in fact, became an important force in Oakland politics during much of the 70's. Gaining membership on various community and anti-poverty boards, they controlled patronage programs funded by the federal or state governments and won recognition as an important power broker within the state Democratic party. Bobby Seale finished a creditable second in a race for mayor; eventually, the Panthers were to play a key role in securing the election of the city's first black mayor.

Newton was also among the first to understand that in the changed climate of Black Power, a political

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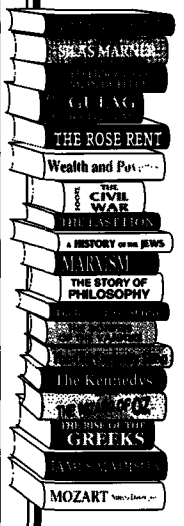

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justification could be discovered to explain away just about any act of criminality committed by a black. During one stint in prison, Newton rationalized an attack on a fellow black inmate by asserting that the man had upheld "the oppressor's interests" (he had objected to Newton's having taken more than his allotment of food). When accusations of criminal conduct were leveled against the Panthers, Newton would respond that such accusations were part of a vast anti-Panther plot orchestrated by the FBI and other government agencies, and the Left believed him.

It is of course true that the Panthers were a special target of both the FBI and local police throughout the country; yet well after the time of regular clashes between Panthers and police, the Left chose to dismiss or simply ignore claims of rampant violence among the Panthers, even when they were made by dropouts from the organization itself.

As PEARSON sees it, the rise of the Panthers cannot be separated from the embrace of a rhetoric of violence on the part of large elements in the civil-rights movement of the late 60's. He suggests that the Panthers might never have existed had not young radicals like Forman, Stokely Carmichael, and H. Rap Brown not paved the way by counseling their young followers to meet violence with violence in what was portrayed as an incorrigibly racist America.

These leaders compounded the problem, in Pearson's view, by romanticizing the black *lumpenproletariat* while denigrating the values of the black middle class. Carmichael, for instance, derided successful blacks who took advantage of their newly-won civil rights to escape the ghetto, while asserting that integration was irrelevant to "the Harlem wino or the cotton picker earning three dollars a day." The Black Panthers' Ten Point Program, issued not long after Carmichael's remarks, was essentially written in behalf of black criminals: a main demand called for the release of all black prison inmates.

What about the good deeds for which, at the time, the Panthers were celebrated: the breakfast programs, health clinics, schools, and other projects inevitably cited by those who contended that the Panthers were committed to the betterment of black America? Pearson devotes little attention to these; he is, in fact, convinced that the Panther legacy has contributed not to the betterment but to the deterioration of the black urban poor, the very people the Panthers claimed to speak for.

Thus, he says, the Panthers, despite their self-destructive history, retain a "legendary appeal" for a generation of young blacks who were not even alive during the heyday of Newton, Cleaver, and Seale. At a time when black authenticity is often equated with macho posturing, the Panthers are frequently perceived as the most authentic of all the civil-rights icons.

Pearson also reserves some cutting observations for the larger culture's lionization of black gangster elements. In an earlier era, publishers touted Eldridge Cleaver's writings as a "document of prime importance for an understanding of the outcast black American soul." Today, a Los Angeles gang member named Monster Cody is billed as a "primary voice of the black experience." And so it goes.

Finally, and most disastrously, the Panther phenomenon gave sanction to a disrespect for law-and-order and the police which continues to haunt black neighborhoods. Of course, the Panthers were not solely or even primarily to blame for the rise of anti-police attitudes among blacks and the liberal Left generally. But the Panther role should not be underestimated. The Panthers promoted themselves, and in turn were promoted by their supporters, as heroes for their willingness to fight the police. Moreover, the Panthers' relentless and often ugly demonization of police officers set a tone for relations between law-enforcement agencies and the black community which remains a serious osbtacle to the war against inner-city crime.

Shadow of the Panther ranks among the more important histories of the civil-rights era. It also stands as a work of unflinching honesty, a quality too rarely encountered among histories of the black experience. Some, no doubt, will wish this book had not been written, even as they privately acknowledge its accuracy. They would be wrong, not only for desiring to suppress inconvenient history, but also because of the book's relevance to today's racial dilemma. As Hugh Pearson observes, the Panther legacy will haunt us "as long as so many promote themselves and are promoted by the media as pathological outsiders to the American mainstream."

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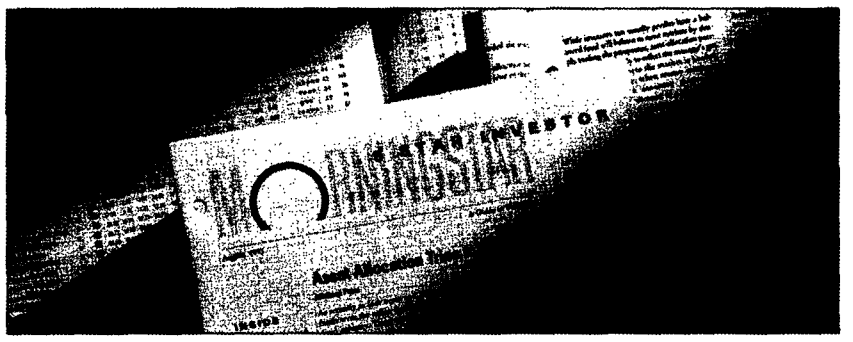

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